

YOSHIHIRO TATSUMI
FALLEN WORDS

EIGHT MORAL COMEDIES BY THE CREATOR OF *A DRIFTING LIFE*

YOSHIHIRO TATSUMI FALLEN WORDS

D+Q

Yashihira Tatsumi's epic memoir *A Drifting Life* was published in 2009 ta averwhelming acclaim, garnering prestigiaus awards around the world, landing an *The New York Times* "graphic baaks" best-seller list, and inspiring a feature-film odaptotion. For his fallaw-up, Tatsumi shifted geors dromatically, finding inspirotian in the centuries-old Japanese starytelling traditian af *rakuga*, ar "fallen words." By fusing this comedic, performance-based art farm with the visuol longuage af *manga*, Tatsumi praved thot, ot the age of seventy-five, he is still ane af the medium's faremast innovotors. Humaraus, pravacative, ond thoroughly unpredictable, *Follen Words* is a deceptively lighthearted look at the maral quandaries af life and death.

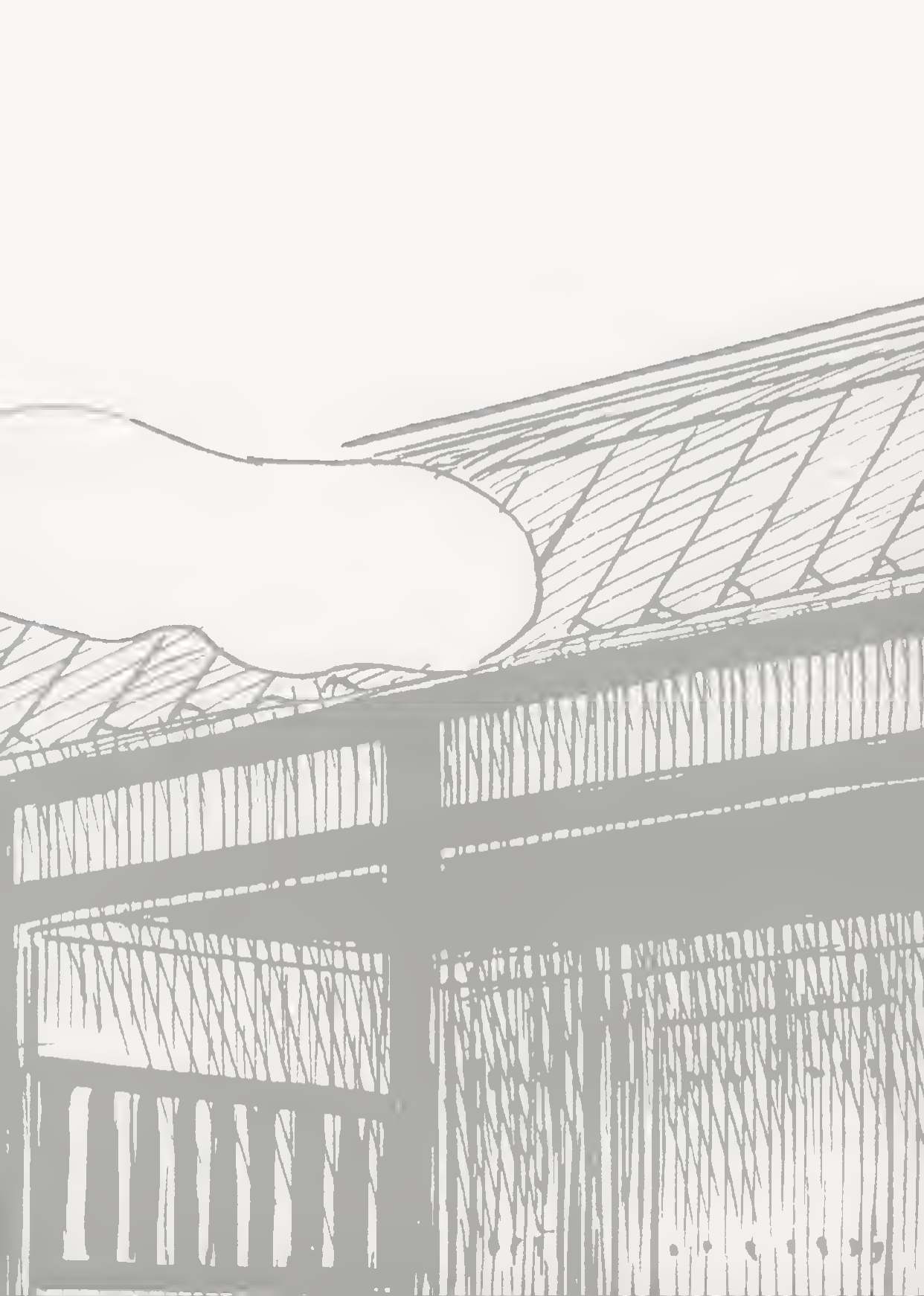
PRAISE FOR YOSHIHIRO TATSUMI

"Remarkoble, amazing...prepare ta be blawn oway." —*The Las Angeles Times Baok Review*

"Storkly beautiful...revelatary...fearless." —*The Village Voice*

"One af Jopon's mast impartant visual artists." —*The New York Times*





辰巳ヨシヒロ

FALLEN WOODS



YOSHIHIRO TATSUMI

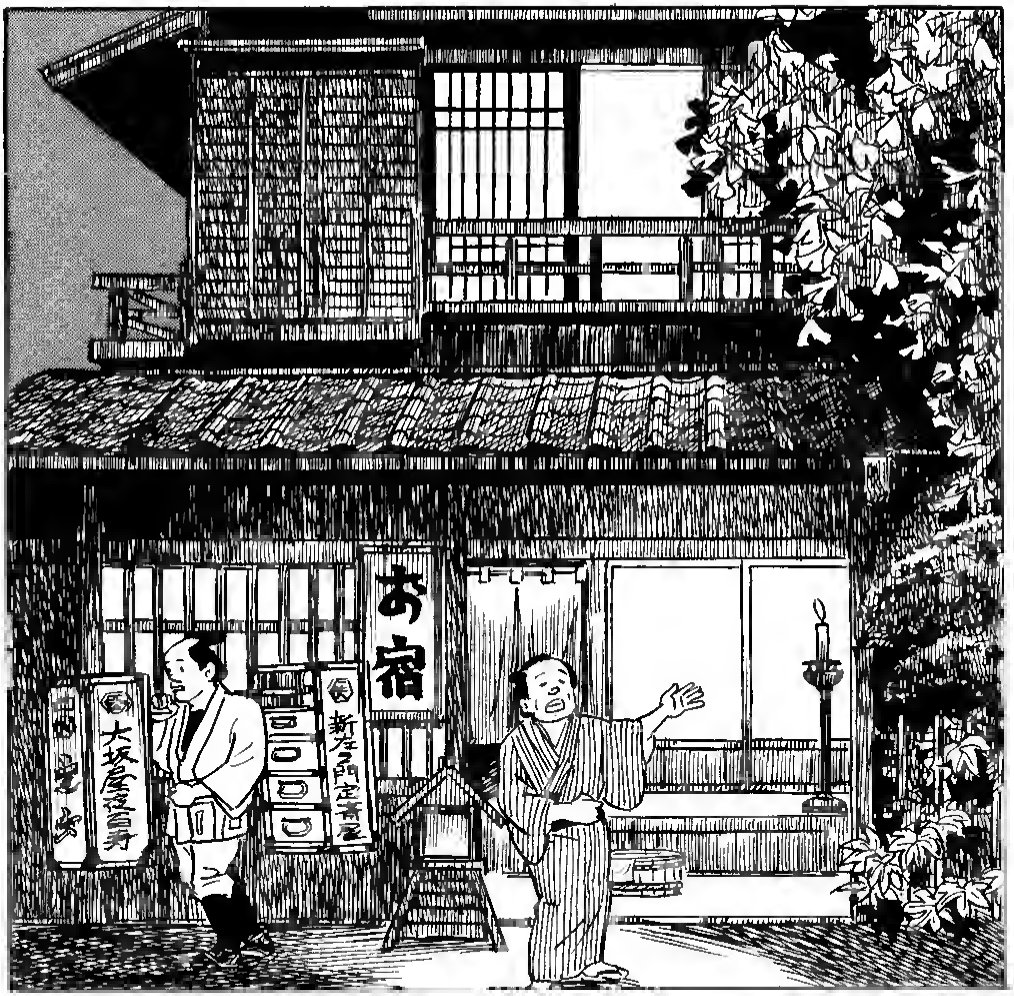
FALLEN WORDS

DRAWN & QUARTERLY PUBLICATIONS

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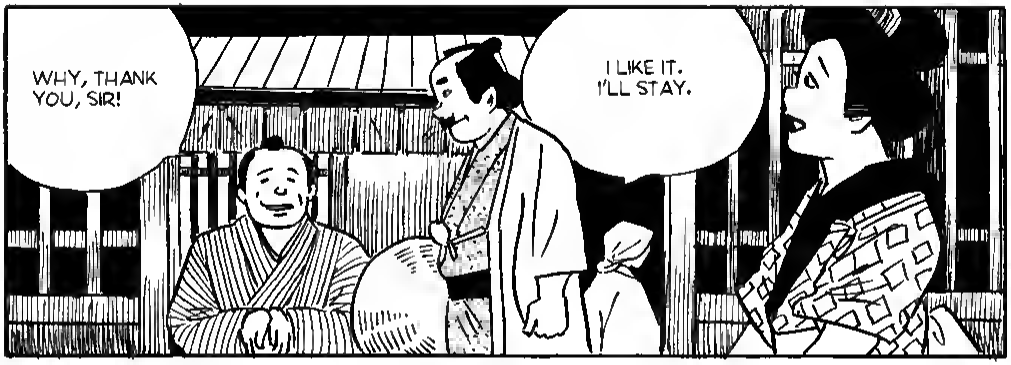
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THE INNKEEPER'S FORTUNE


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I DO APOLOGIZE, SIR. WE HAVE NOTHING TO BE PROUD OF HERE BUT OUR LONG HISTORY.
HMM, NOT THE CLEANEST PLACE, IS IT?
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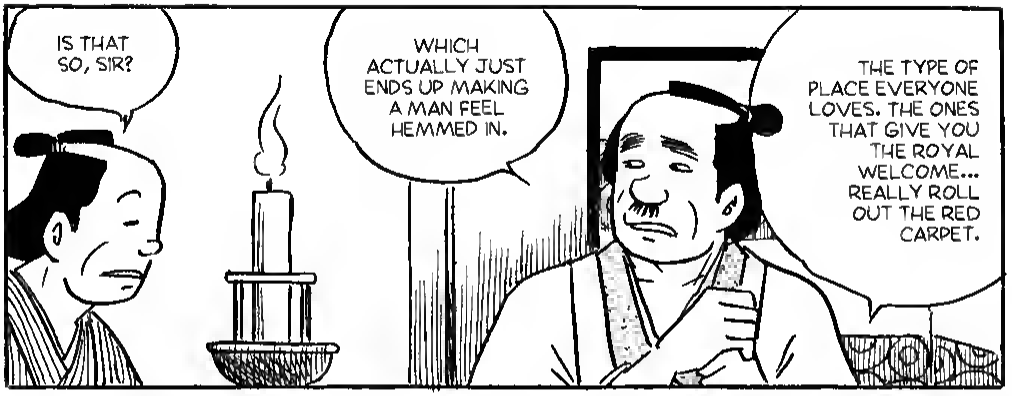

お宿
HELLO! WILL YOU BE STAYING THE NIGHT, SIR?


WHY, THANK YOU, SIR!
I LIKE IT. I'LL STAY.

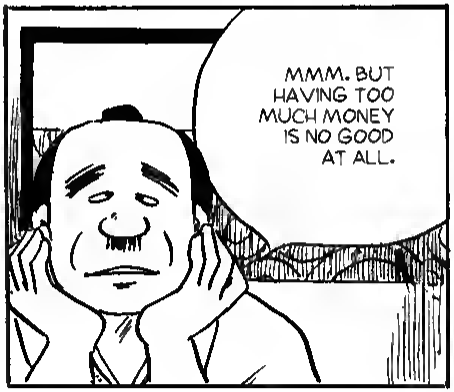

NO NEED TO THANK ME.
I MUST THANK YOU, SIR, FOR DEIGNING TO STAY IN OUR HUMBLE INN.

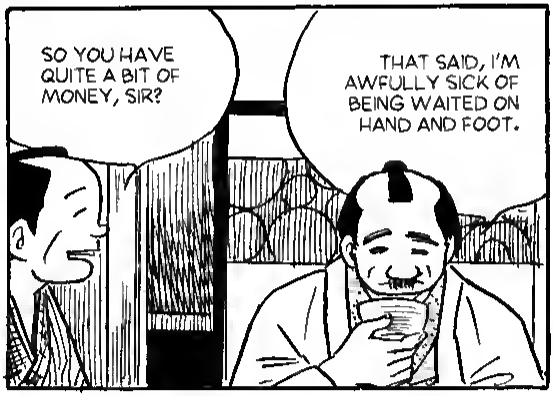

PLEASE DO WATCH YOUR STEP, SIR.
YOUR ROOM WILL BE ON THE SECOND FLOOR, SIR.


SIR?
EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE MANY WONDERFUL INNS JUST UP THE ROAD.
I KNOW FULL WELL THE KIND OF PLACE THIS IS. I CHOSE IT ON PURPOSE.

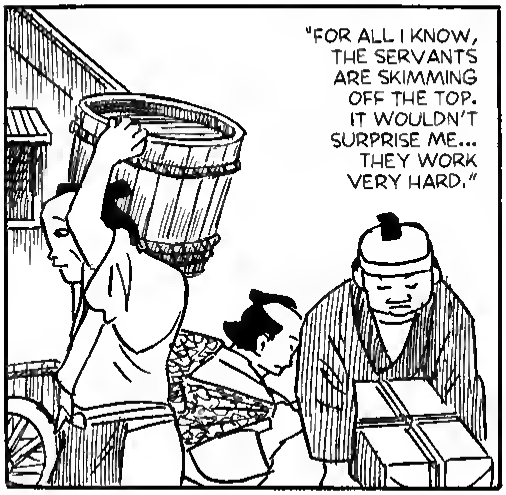

IS THAT SO, SIR?
WHICH ACTUALLY JUST ENDS UP MAKING A MAN FEEL HEMMED IN.
THE TYPE OF PLACE EVERYONE LOVES. THE ONES THAT GIVE YOU THE ROYAL WELCOME... REALLY ROLL OUT THE RED CARPET.

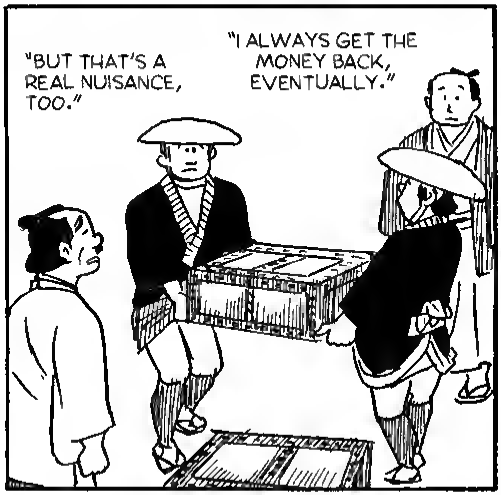

"I HAVE SEVENTY MAIDS JUST TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF AND MY OWN NEEDS. I DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING."
"AT HOME, I HAVE FIVE HUNDRED SERVANTS, YOU SEE."

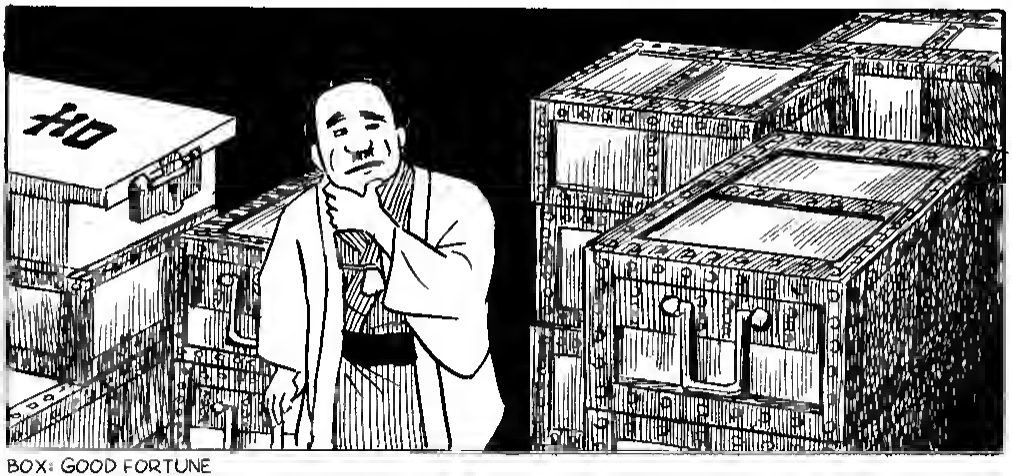

MMM. BUT HAVING TOO MUCH MONEY IS NO GOOD AT ALL.


SO YOU HAVE QUITE A BIT OF MONEY, SIR?
THAT SAID, I'M AWFULLY SICK OF BEING WAITED ON HAND AND FOOT.





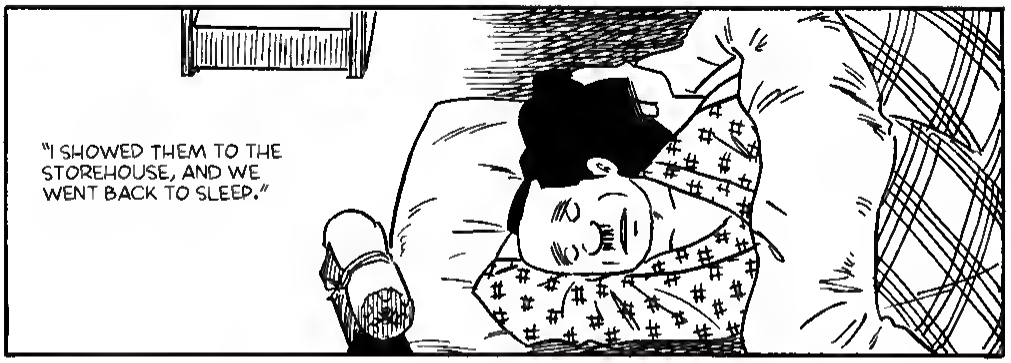




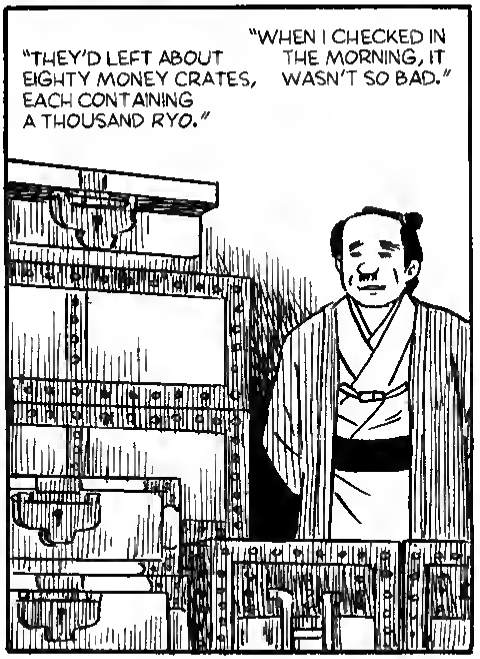
BOX: GOOD FORTUNE

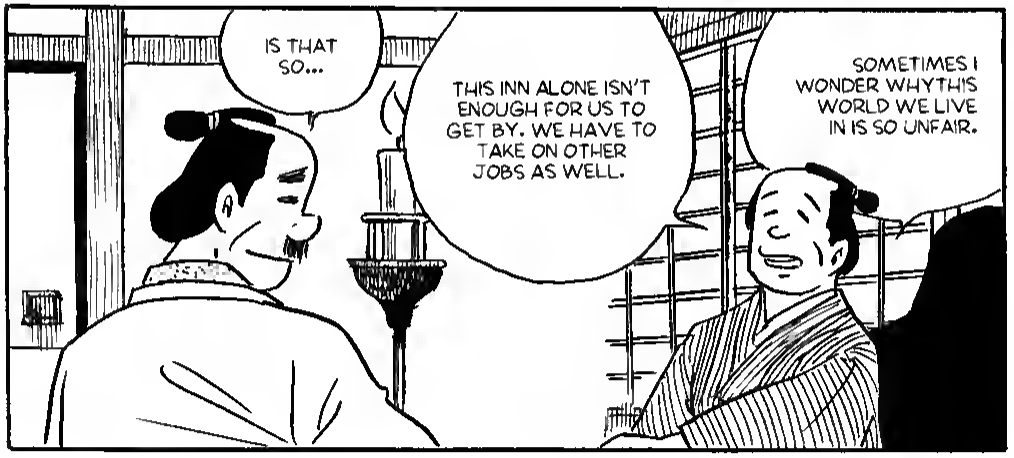

"WE PUT A FEW OF THE MONEY CRATES ON TOP OF THE BARRELS INSTEAD, AND THEY DID THE JOB QUITE NICELY."
"AND THEN THERE WAS THE TIME WHEN THE WOMEN WERE PICKLING VEGETABLES AND THE ROCKS KEPT ROLLING OFF THE BARRELS."
"THEN WHILE WE HAD IT SET UP LIKE THAT, SOME FELLOW CAME ALONG AND TOOK THE CRATES."
MY GOODNESS. YOU REALLY HAVE QUITE THE FORTUNE, DON'T YOU, SIR?
AMAZING, HUH?


"ONE TIME, A GANG OF THIEVES BROKE INTO THE HOUSE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT. THERE WERE FIFTEEN, MAYBE SIXTEEN OF THEM."
NOW TAKE IT AND GO.
DON'T DO ANYTHING FOOLISH.
IT'S MONEY THAT YOU WANT, RIGHT?
I'LL GIVE YOU THE MONEY.


"I SHOWED THEM TO THE STOREHOUSE, AND WE WENT BACK TO SLEEP."

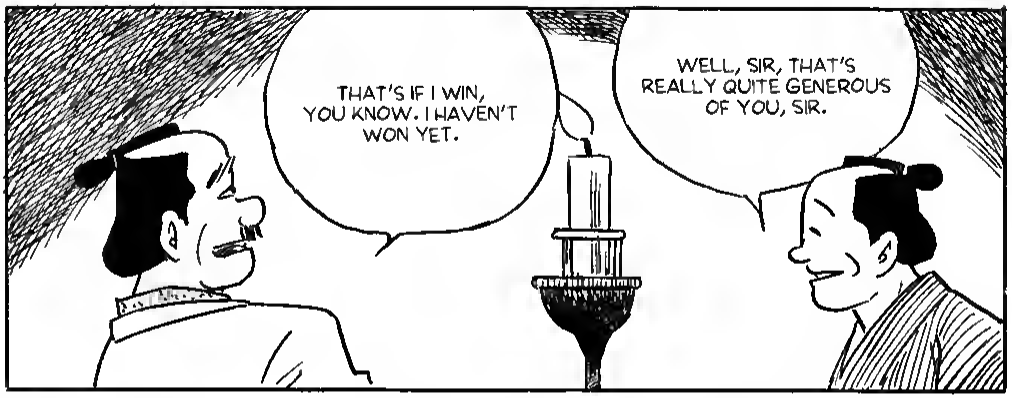

I CAN'T COMPARE WITH SUCH A WEALTHY MAN AS YOURSELF, SIR. I AM TRULY THE VERY PICTURE OF POVERTY ITSELF.
THEY COULD ONLY CARRY AWAY SO MUCH, YOU SEE.


"WHEN I CHECKED IN THE MORNING, IT WASN'T SO BAD."
"THEY'D LEFT ABOUT EIGHTY MONEY CRATES, EACH CONTAINING A THOUSAND RYO."


IS THAT SO...
THIS INN ALONE ISN'T ENOUGH FOR US TO GET BY. WE HAVE TO TAKE ON OTHER JOBS AS WELL.
SOMETIMES I WONDER WHY THIS WORLD WE LIVE IN IS SO UNFAIR.

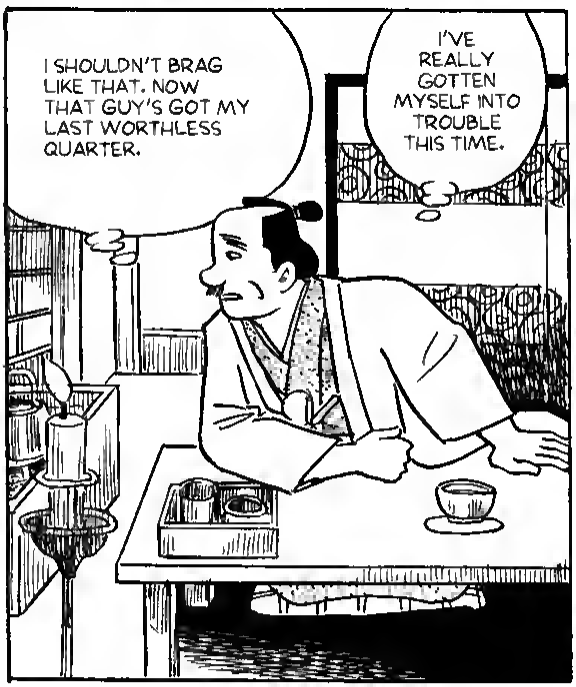

I ONLY HAVE ONE LEFT, YOU SEE.
PERHAPS YOU'D BE INTERESTED IN PURCHASING ONE, SIR?
IN FACT, I ALSO SELL LOTTERY TICKETS, SIR.
TICKET: 1365
WAIT...SO I HAVE TO PAY A THOUSAND RYO?
ONE TICKET COSTS A QUARTER, AND IF YOUR NUMBER IS DRAWN, YOU WIN A THOUSAND RYO.
HMM? WHAT'S THIS? A LOTTERY?
THE DRAWING IS TOMORROW, SIR.
THAT SMALL AMOUNT? WHAT A NUISANCE.
OH, I SEE. I WOULDN'T WANT SOMEONE TO GIVE ME A THOUSAND RYO.
NO, NO, SIR! YOU COULD WIN A THOUSAND RYO.
HOW MUCH?
THANK YOU VERY MUCH, SIR.
WELL THEN, I SUPPOSE I COULD BUY A TICKET PROVIDED IT DOESN'T WIN.
NO NEED TO WORRY, SIR. IT'S ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO WIN.


WHAT, EXACTLY, DOES A QUARTER LOOK LIKE?
A SINGLE QUARTER? I DON'T KNOW THAT I'VE EVER SEEN SUCH A THING. I DON'T CARRY SMALL CHANGE.
A QUARTER, SIR.
YES, SIR. THAT'S A QUARTER.
AH! I FOUND ONE! THIS?
MAYBE I HAVE ONE OF THOSE IN MY SLEEVE SOMEWHERE...
OH! THE ONE WE ALWAYS GIVE TO BEGGARS?
NO, SIR, THAT WOULDN'T DO. PLEASE. THE GRAND PRIZE IS ONE THOUSAND RYO.
I DON'T NEED ANY TICKET.
THEN... THE LOTTERY TICKET.
IT IS, IS IT? WELL THEN, TAKE IT.
IF I DO WIN, I'LL GIVE YOU HALF. SO IF I WIN A THOUSAND RYO, THAT'D BE FIVE HUNDRED FOR YOU.
I SEE. ALTHOUGH I'D BE IN A SPOT IF I WON.
SECOND PRIZE IS FIVE HUNDRED RYO, AND THIRD PRIZE IS THREE HUNDRED-


THAT'S IF I WIN, YOU KNOW. I HAVEN'T WON YET.
WELL, SIR, THAT'S REALLY QUITE GENEROUS OF YOU, SIR.


I'LL TAKE MY SUPPER AND THEN I'LL BE OFF TO BED.
ER, HMM...BRING ME SOME SAKE.


MM. I'LL DO JUST THAT.
PLEASE ENJOY YOUR STAY, SIR.


I SHOULDN'T BRAG LIKE THAT. NOW THAT GUY'S GOT MY LAST WORTHLESS QUARTER.
I'VE REALLY GOTTEN MYSELF INTO TROUBLE THIS TIME.




WELL, IT'S DONE. AND NOW THAT HE THINKS I'M RICH, HE WON'T BE PRESSURING ME ABOUT PAYING FOR THE ROOM RIGHT AWAY.
I SHOULD HAVE KEPT MY MOUTH SHUT.
HEH HEH HEH!
EAT AS MUCH AS I CAN, THEN SLIP AWAY.
DRINK AS MUCH AS I CAN...
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING. I'VE BROUGHT DINNER AND SAKE, SIR.

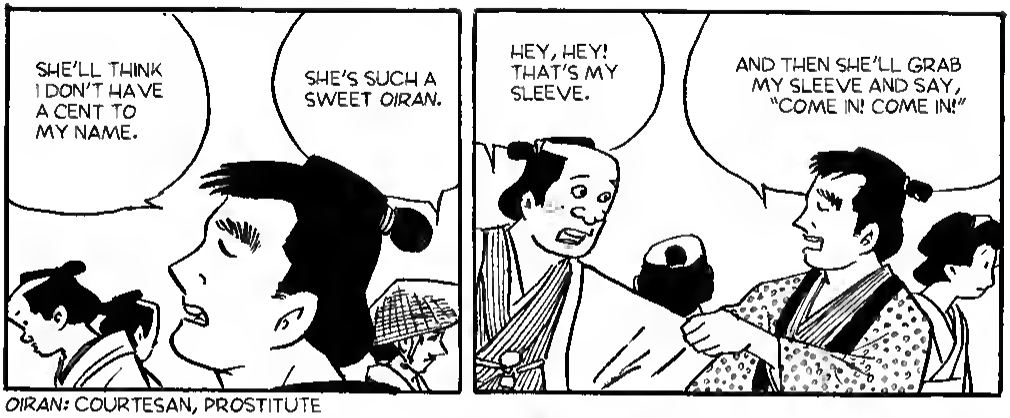

YES, THANK YOU.
HAVE YOU FINISHED YOUR BREAKFAST, SIR?
THE NEXT MORNING...
CHEEP CHEEP
THEY WENT OUT EARLIER, SIR. THEY HAD A NUMBER OF ERRANDS TODAY.
AND WHERE IS THE MADAM OF THE HOUSE? AND HER HUSBAND?
I'M WORRIED HE MIGHT NOT SHOW UP TO PAY ME BACK.
I'M ACTUALLY WAITING FOR SOME-ONE WHO BORROWED TWENTY THOUSAND RYO FROM ME.
TUK
AH, DID THEY?
THEY SAID TO CONVEY THEIR REGARDS TO THE GENTLEMAN ON THE SECOND FLOOR.


WE'LL LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR RETURN, SIR.
WOULD YOU GET MY SHOES OUT FOR ME?
YES, OF COURSE.
MAYBE I'LL JUST GO OVER AND TALK TO HIM.
NO MONEY, EITHER.
...HMM, I GOT OUT, BUT I'VE GOT NOWHERE TO GO...
OH YEAH...THE THOUSAND-RYO LOTTERY. THE DRAWING IS TODAY.
名物天
I WONDER WHY THERE'S SUCH A CROWD AT TENNOJI TEMPLE?

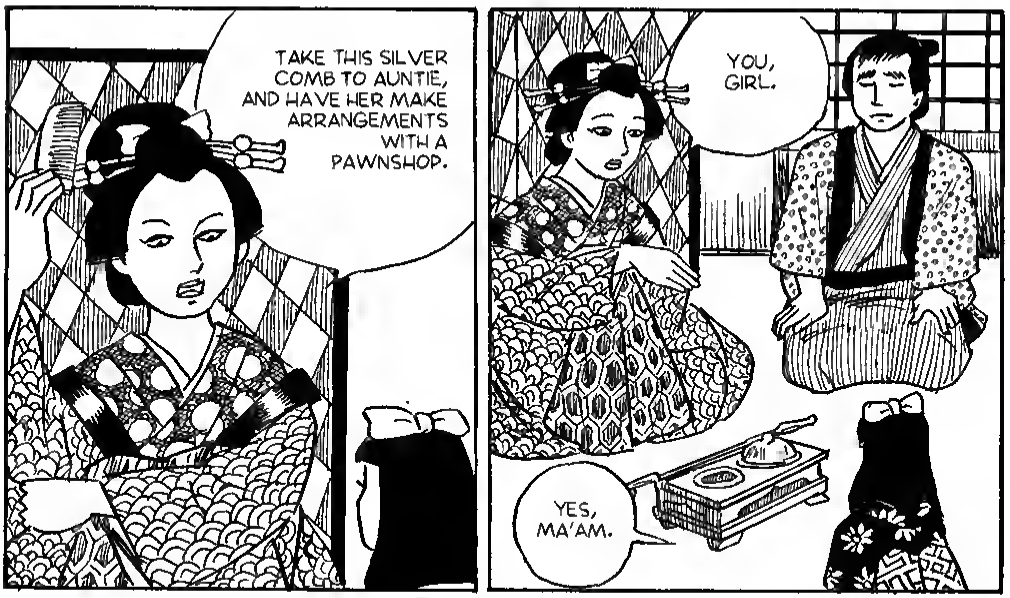

NO, NO, THE THREE HUNDRED RYO FOR THIRD IS MORE THAN ENOUGH.
OH NO, I NEVER SAID I WANTED THE THOUSAND RYO. SECOND PRIZE IS PLENTY.
IT'S FINALLY TODAY, HM? YOU WANT TO WIN THE THOUSAND RYO, RIGHT?
I DON'T WIN WITH LUCK.
WELL, THERE'S NO WAY OF KNOWING YOU WON'T. IT'S ALL A MATTER OF LUCK, RIGHT?
OH, I WON'T WIN IT.
YOU WANT TO WIN THE THOUSAND RYO, RIGHT?
I PRAYED TO GOD.
BECAUSE I KNOW.
YOU DON'T...? WHY NOT?
"AND THEN LAST NIGHT, GOD CAME TO MY BEDSIDE, OKAY?"
CLAP
PLEASE LET ME WIN THE LOTTERY.


WHY, THAT'S AWFUL!! YOU'RE GOD, AREN'T YOU? I'VE MADE SO MANY OFFERINGS TO YOU!
I WOULD LIKE TO LET YOU WIN THE THOUSAND RYO AS YOU REQUESTED, BUT CIRCUMSTANCES BEING WHAT THEY ARE, I AM NOT ABLE TO GRANT YOU THIS.
YOU MUST BE SATISFIED WITH FIVE HUNDRED RYO... UNDERSTOOD?
INSTEAD, I WILL ALLOW YOU TO WIN THE SECOND PRIZE OF FIVE HUNDRED RYO.
YOU HAVE TO LET ME WIN.
FIVE HUNDRED? I'D BE HAPPY WITH THE THREE HUNDRED!
HEY! THIS GUY SAYS HE'S GONNA WIN SECOND.
...AND THAT'S WHY I'M GOING TO WIN THE FIVE HUNDRED.
FIRST OF ALL, I'M GONNA PUT THREE HUNDRED IN SMALL COINS IN MY POCKET, AND GO DO SOME "WINDOW SHOPPING" IN THE YOSHIWARA RED-LIGHT DISTRICT.
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO IF YOU WIN THE THOUSAND?


JUST COME IN.
OH MY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE!
"THREE HUNDRED RYO GOES A LONG WAY IN YOSHIWARA."
IF YOU COME IN, WELL...
COME IN!
NO, DON'T. COME IN.
I'M JUST MAKING THE ROUNDS.
"YOU CAN COME IN, CAN'T YOU?! HOW'S YOUR WALLET? FULL?"
"DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. WE'LL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT, BABE."
ANYONE WANT TO TRADE PLACES? WE GOT A WEIRD ONE OVER HERE.
"NO, NO, COME IN!"



OIRAN: COURTESAN, PROSTITUTE



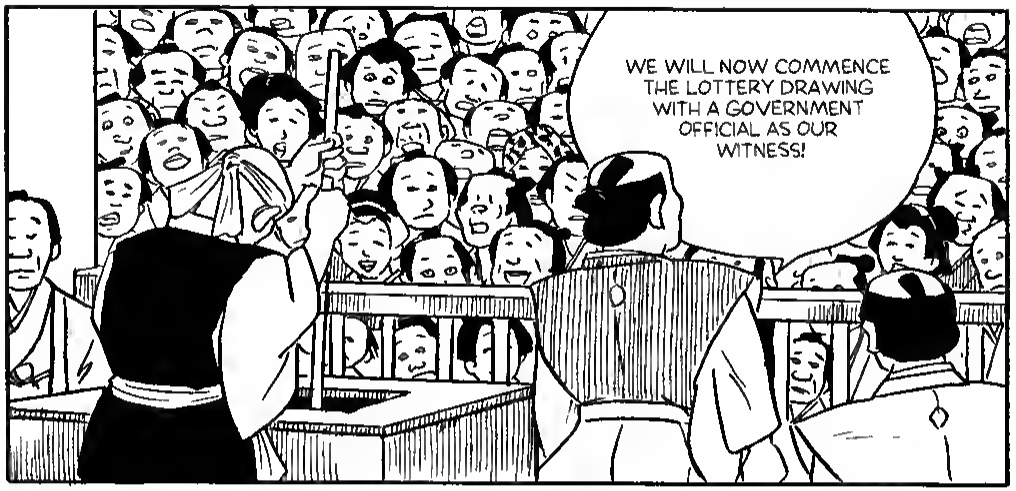



YOU'RE CRYING.
JUST BREAKS IT...
IMAGINE...A WOMAN LIKE THAT, PUTTING HER PRECIOUS COMB INTO HOCK SO WE CAN BE TOGETHER! BREAKS YOUR HEART, DOESN'T IT?
BRING SOME SAKE.
ARE YOU KIDDING? THERE'S NO WAY I'LL BE ABLE TO SLEEP AFTER EATING SWEETS.
TONIGHT, LET'S EAT SOMETHING SWEET AND HAVE SOME STRONG TEA BEFORE WE REST, OKAY?
YOUR WALLET'S EMPTY, SO...
WE CAN'T HAVE SAKE.
CHANK
I HAVE MONEY RIGHT HERE.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? BRING FIFTY BOTTLES! BRING A HUNDRED!
YOU HAVE NO MONEY.


MY GOODNESS! WHERE DID YOU GET ALL THIS?
I WON THE LOTTERY.
CLANK
I'M GOING TO BUY YOU OUT OF BONDAGE.
OH, I'M SO HAPPY!!
I WARMED THE SAKE.
"...AND I'M GOING TO BUY A HOUSE."

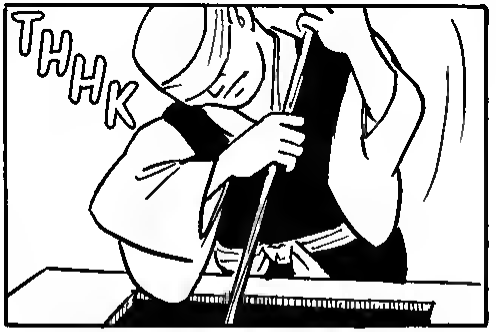

I COULDN'T.
AND FOR YOU...
OH, GOOD. POUR ME A CUP.
OH, NO. ABSOLUTELY NOT.
THAT'S OKAY, ISN'T IT?
MY FACE WILL GET RED.
WHY NOT?
AND AS A FORMER OIRAN, SHE'LL BE VERY SKILLED.
AND THEN... AND THEN WE'LL GO TO BED...
SHALL WE GO TO BED?
AH, I'M REALLY DRUNK NOW.
BUT THAT'S ONLY IF YOU WIN THE LOTTERY, RIGHT?
SHE'LL PUT HER LIPS TO MINE, SMOOCH, SMOOCH...
HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?


HEY, IT'S FINALLY STARTING!
MURMUR
MURMUR
I'LL HAVE SOME *UDON* NOODLES AND GO TO BED.
WHAT IF YOU DON'T WIN?









VARIOUS NUMBERS WRITTEN ON THE TICKETS






FIRST PRIZE GOES TO NUMBER ONE THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED, SIXTY-FIVE!
ONE, THREE, SIX, FIVE!
EIGHT HUN-DRED.
BY HOW MUCH?
SO CLOSE! JUST A LITTLE OFF!
WELL? DID YOU WIN?
I'M GOING TO WIN SECOND PRIZE COMING UP.
I DIDN'T WIN.
HOW ABOUT YOU?
THAT'S NOT REALLY "SO CLOSE."
MY NUMBER IS TWO THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED, FORTY-FIVE. IT'LL DEFINITELY BE THE NEXT NUMBER THEY DRAW.
AFTER ALL, THAT'S WHAT GOD TOLD ME.


THE SECOND PRIZE IN THE LOTTERY...
THHK
TWO...
SAY "TWO!!"
TWO! COME ON... TWO!
...THOUSAND...
...THOUSAND!!
...THREE HUNDRED...
THREE HUNDRED!!

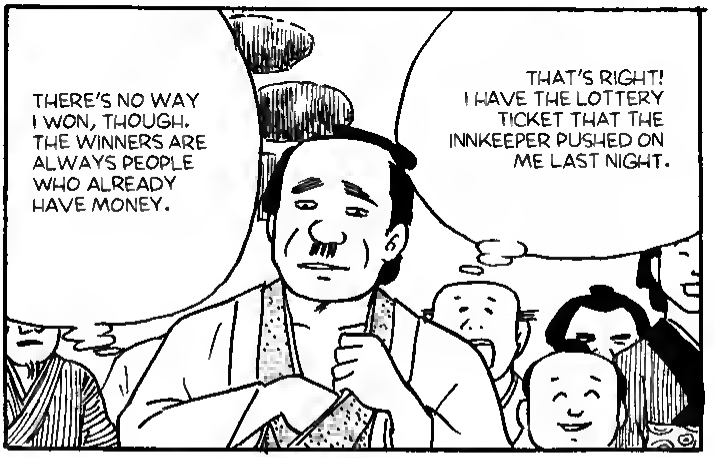

...FORTY...
FORTY!!
...SIX.
JUST LIKE GOD SAID!! FIVE!!
THIS IS IT! THIS IS IT!
HE FAINTED!
TWO THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED, FORTY-SIX!!
DAMN IT! GUESS I'LL HAVE SOME *UDON* AND GO TO BED.
THIRD PRIZE! ONE THOUSAND, SEVEN HUNDRED...


PEOPLE REALLY DO COME OUT ON LOTTERY DAY.


HMM...
SECOND PRIZE... THIRD PRIZE...

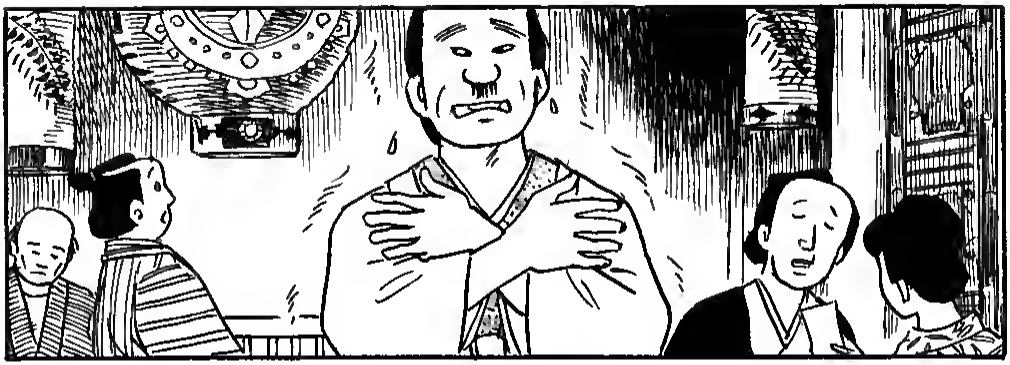

THE THOUSAND RYO GOES TO NUMBER ONE THOUSAND, THREE HUND-RED...
OH, THE NUMBERS.


I KNEW I WOULDN'T WIN. I'VE GOT THE WORST LUCK.

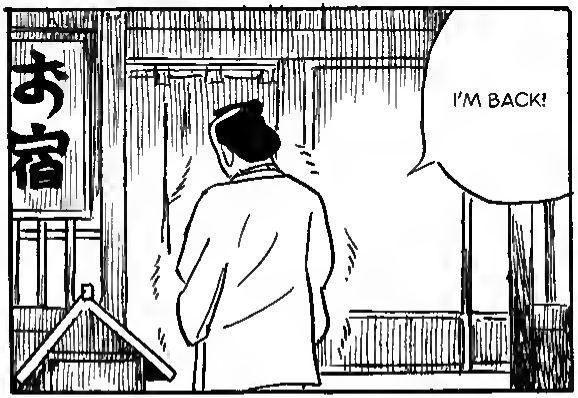

THERE'S NO WAY I WON, THOUGH. THE WINNERS ARE ALWAYS PEOPLE WHO ALREADY HAVE MONEY.
THAT'S RIGHT! I HAVE THE LOTTERY TICKET THAT THE INNKEEPER PUSHED ON ME LAST NIGHT.


MY NUMBER IS ONE THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED, FIFTY-SIX...
LET'S SEE... FIRST PRIZE IS ONE THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED, SIXTY-FIVE.


WAIT A MINUTE. MY NUMBER IS ONE THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED, SIXTY-FIVE...
SO CLOSE. OFF BY JUST A LITTLE.
THIS THING'S JUST A WASTE OF PAPER WHEN YOU DON'T WIN.
...GUESS I'LL GET GOING THEN.
ONE THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED, SIXTY-FIVE...
HM?!
RATTLE
TREMBLE
SHAKE
SHAKE
TREMBLE
RATTLE
I-I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
ONE THOUSAND RYO!!
I-I WON! I WON!! AAAH!

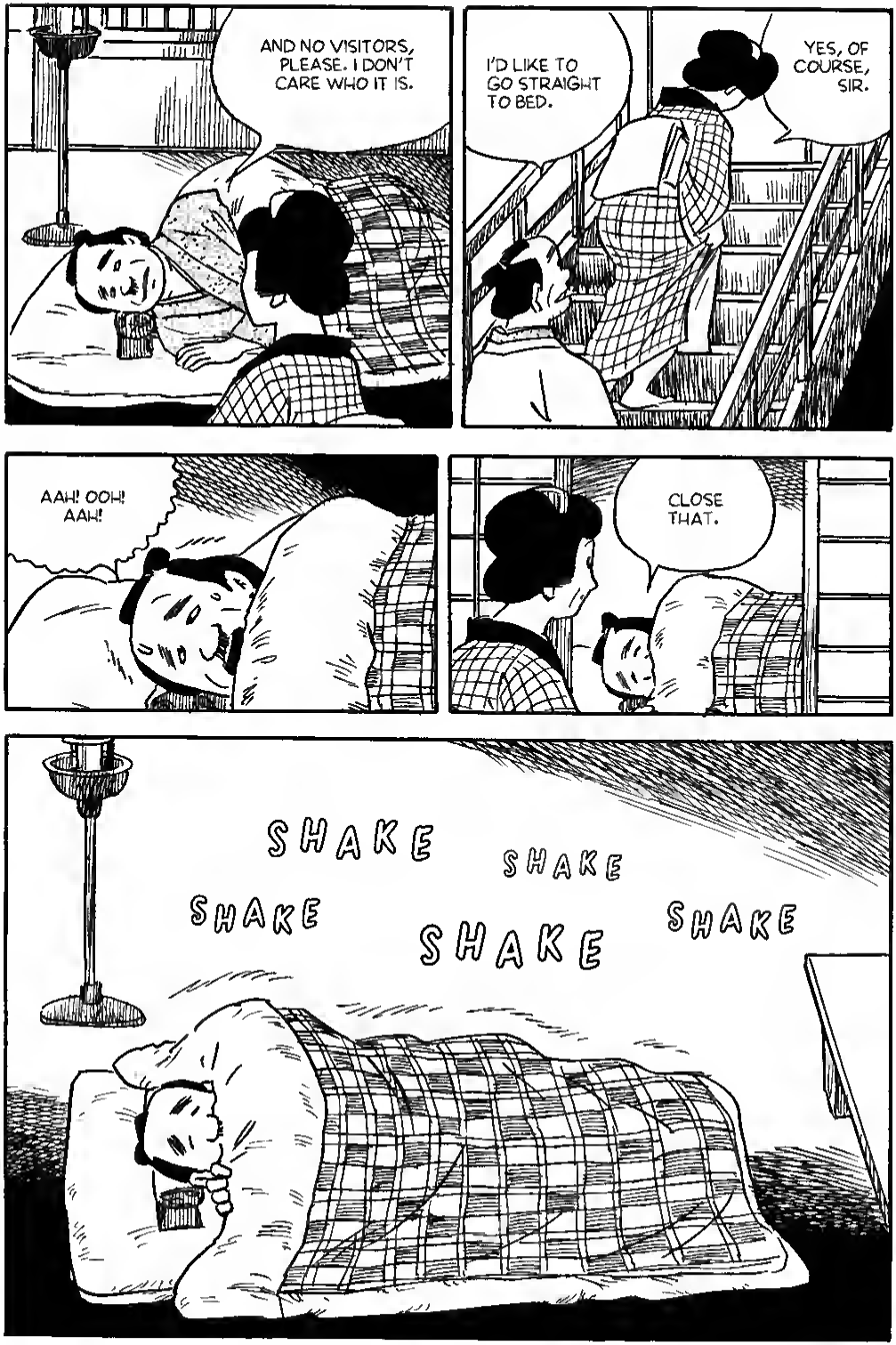



AND HERE I AM, SHAKING LIKE A LEAF.
OH, I SHOULDN'T HAVE BLATHERED LIKE THAT LAST NIGHT. NOW THE INNKEEPER IS SURE TO COME RUNNING TO CONGRATULATE ME ON WINNING THE THOUSAND RYO.

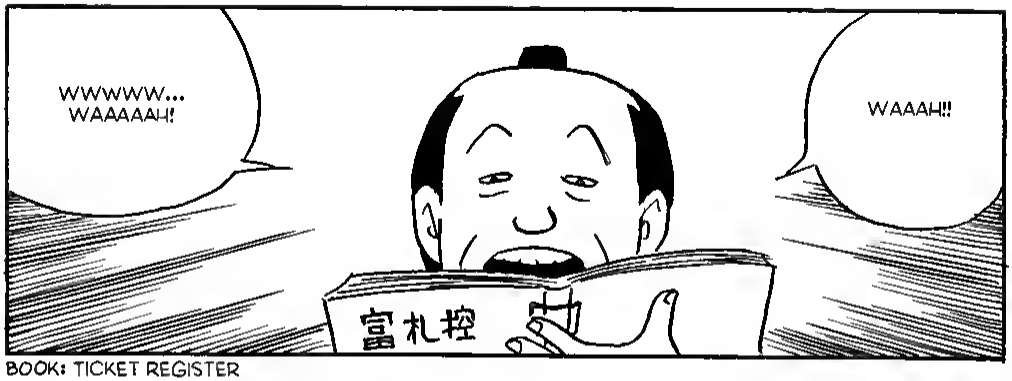

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I'M BACK!


I'LL JUST GO BACK AND GO TO SLEEP.


I THINK I CAUGHT A COLD. NOTHING TO BE DONE ABOUT IT. PLEASE PREPARE MY BED UPSTAIRS.
YOU'RE PALE AS A GHOST.
DID YOU ENJOY YOURSELF, SIR?

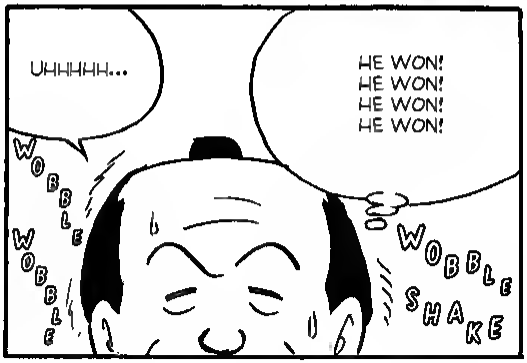

AND NO VISITORS, PLEASE. I DON'T CARE WHO IT IS.
I'D LIKE TO GO STRAIGHT TO BED.
YES, OF COURSE, SIR.
AAH! OOH! AAH!
CLOSE THAT.
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE

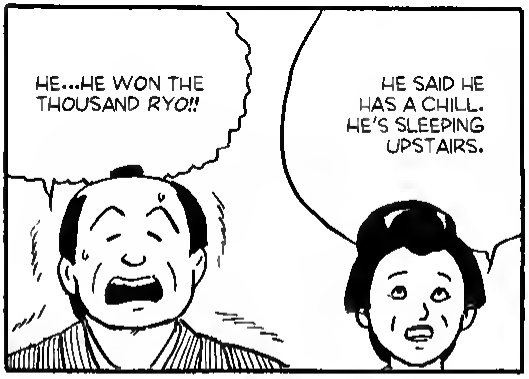

AH. TODAY'S BEEN A BUSY ONE.
I'LL JUST MAKE A NOTE OF THE WINNERS.
I SHOULD CHECK THE RESULTS. I WAS SELLING TICKETS, AFTER ALL.
OH, THEY'VE DONE THE DRAWING.
SIGN: LOTTERY
OH, WOW... IT'S THE TICKET I SOLD TO THE GUEST ON THE SECOND FLOOR LAST NIGHT.
THE FIRST PRIZE WINNER IS ONE THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED, SIXTY-FIVE...
FIRST, SECOND, THIRD...
LET'S SEE...ONE THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED, SIXTY-FIVE.
MAYBE I'VE GOT THE NUMBERS MIXED UP.
IMPOSSIBLE...
HE SAID HE'D GIVE ME HALF IF HE WON.



BOOK: TICKET REGISTER

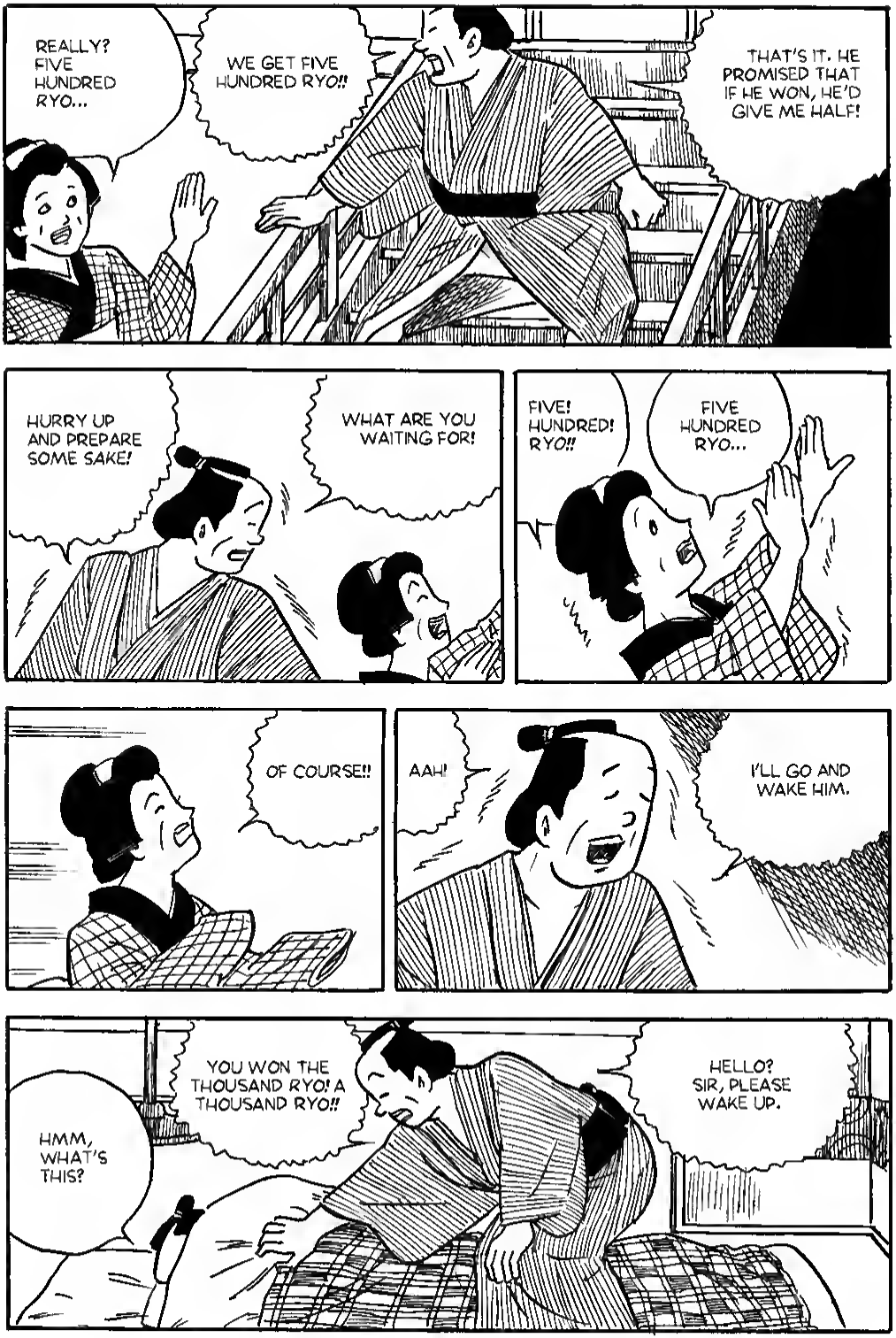











REALLY? FIVE HUNDRED RYO...
WE GET FIVE HUNDRED RYO!!
THAT'S IT. HE PROMISED THAT IF HE WON, HE'D GIVE ME HALF!
HURRY UP AND PREPARE SOME SAKE!
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR!
FIVE! HUNDRED! RYO!!
FIVE HUNDRED RYO...
OF COURSE!!
AAH!
I'LL GO AND WAKE HIM.
HMM, WHAT'S THIS?
YOU WON THE THOUSAND RYO! A THOUSAND RYO!!
HELLO? SIR, PLEASE WAKE UP.


AND FIVE HUNDRED FOR ME!
AFTER ALL, IT'S ONLY A THOUSAND RYO.
THAT'S NO REASON FOR ALL THIS FUSS, IS IT?
WE-WE'VE WARMED SOME SAKE DOWN-STAIRS. PLEASE COME AND RAISE A GLASS TO CELEBRATE, SIR!
HONESTLY... MAKING SUCH A FUSS...
I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU!! NO NEED TO HARP ON IT.
NO REASON FOR THAT AT ALL.
A DRINK TO CELEBRATE A MERE THOUSAND RYO?

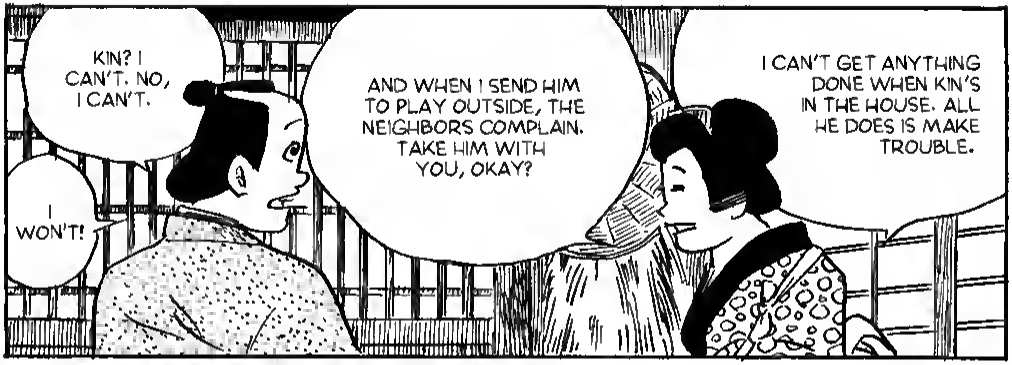

I WAS JUST SO THRILLED, I LOST MY HEAD...
AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING WEARING SANDALS IN HERE?
I DIDN'T THINK SOMEONE COULD GET SO EXCITED THAT THEY'D ENTER A ROOM WITH THEIR SANDALS STILL ON.
POOR PEOPLE REALLY HAVE NO MANNERS!
DRINKING SAKE ALL BECAUSE OF A THOUSAND RYO...
YOU'RE QUITE PERSIS-TENT.
IM SORRY, SIR. BUT IN ANY CASE, PLEASE COME DOWN, SIR.
NO, I DON'T WANT TO.

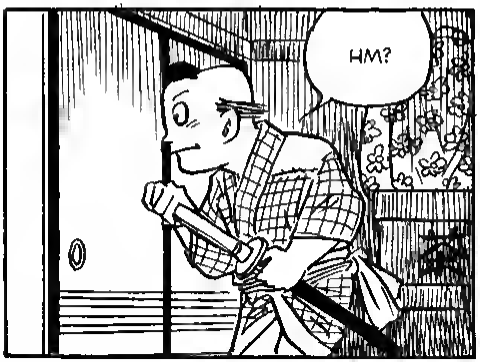

I DON'T WANT TO.
WHY SHOULDN'T WE? IT'S ALL READY, SIR.
FWWSH
HM? PLEASE GET UP.
DON'T SAY THAT. PLEASE GET UP, SIR.
SANDALS!!


NEW YEAR FESTIVAL
十三里



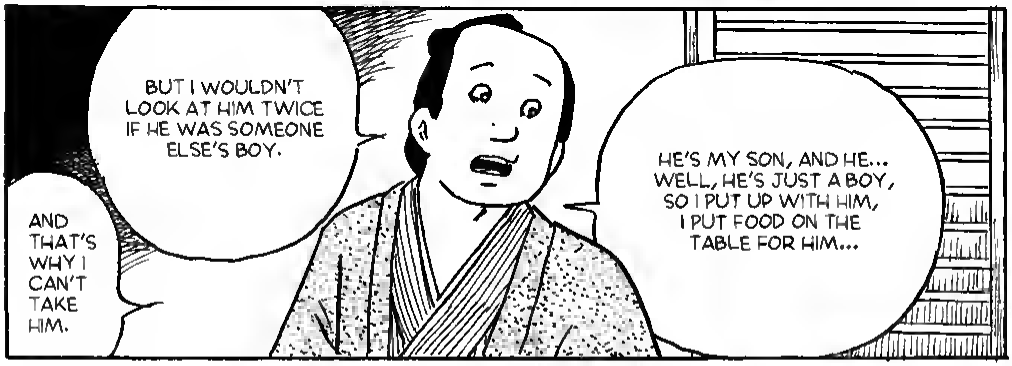

THOUGHT I'D HEAD OVER TO THE SHRINE. FIRST VISIT OF THE YEAR.
OH, GREAT! PERFECT TIMING!
IS THAT YOUR FORMAL JACKET? WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO, SWEETIE?

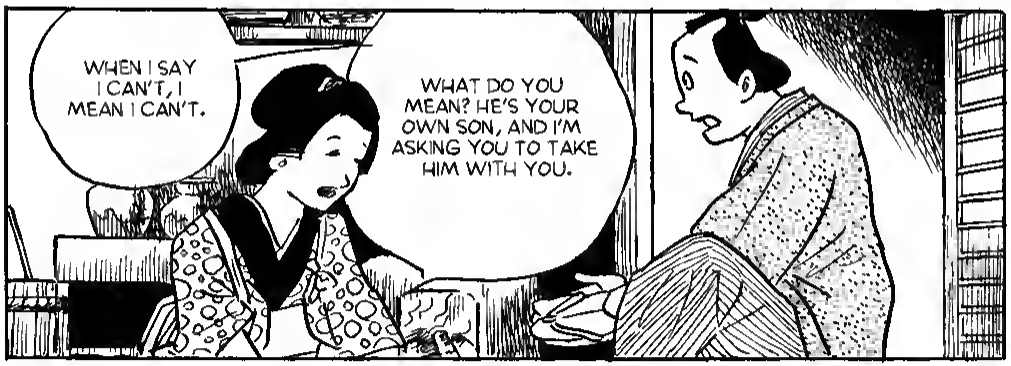

KIN? I CAN'T. NO, I CAN'T.
I WON'T!
AND WHEN I SEND HIM TO PLAY OUTSIDE, THE NEIGHBORS COMPLAIN. TAKE HIM WITH YOU, OKAY?
I CAN'T GET ANYTHING DONE WHEN KIN'S IN THE HOUSE. ALL HE DOES IS MAKE TROUBLE.


HM?


I...WE DON'T REALLY GET ALONG.
AND WHY NOT?

BOX: TEA


AND THAT'S WHY I CAN'T TAKE HIM.
BUT I WOULDN'T LOOK AT HIM TWICE IF HE WAS SOMEONE ELSE'S BOY.
HE'S MY SON, AND HE... WELL, HE'S JUST A BOY, SO I PUT UP WITH HIM, I PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE FOR HIM...


WHEN I SAY I CAN'T, I MEAN I CAN'T.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? HE'S YOUR OWN SON, AND I'M ASKING YOU TO TAKE HIM WITH YOU.


COME ON, YOU GUYS. DON'T YOU KNOW I'LL TURN OUT ALL WRONG IF YOU'RE NOT NICE TO EACH OTHER?
HEH HEH HEH! ARE MY DEAR MOMMY AND DADDY HAVING A LOVERS' QUARREL?
NOPE. DON'T WANT TO. WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
KIN, GO OUTSIDE AND PLAY RIGHT NOW!
"LOVERS' QUARREL," HE SAYS...HE SHOULDN'T TALK LIKE THAT. HE'S JUST A KID.
DADDY, TAKE ME WITH YOU!
I CAN'T.
ARE TOO. YOU'VE GOT YOUR GOOD JACKET ON. TAKE ME WITH YOU.
I'M NOT GOING ANY-WHERE.


TAKE MEEEEEE! COME ON! DAD! DAD!
LIAR!! I KNOW YOU'RE NOT WORKING TODAY!
LOOK, I ALREADY TOLD YOU: I CAN'T. I HAVE SOME VERY IMPORTANT WORK TO DO.
OKAY, FINE...IF YOU DON'T TAKE ME WHILE I'M STILL ASKING NICELY, THIS COULD BECOME VERY UNPLEASANT.
HMPH, SO YOU'RE DEFINITELY NOT GONNA TAKE ME, HUH? EVEN THOUGH I'M BEGGING YOU?
NOW HOLD ON THERE. ARE YOU THREATENING YOUR OWN FATHER?
I GUESS NOT. I'D BE SCARED, THOUGH.
HEH HEH HEH... WHAT SHOULD I DO? THIS IS GONNA BE FUN.
YOU THINK YOU CAN SCARE ME?

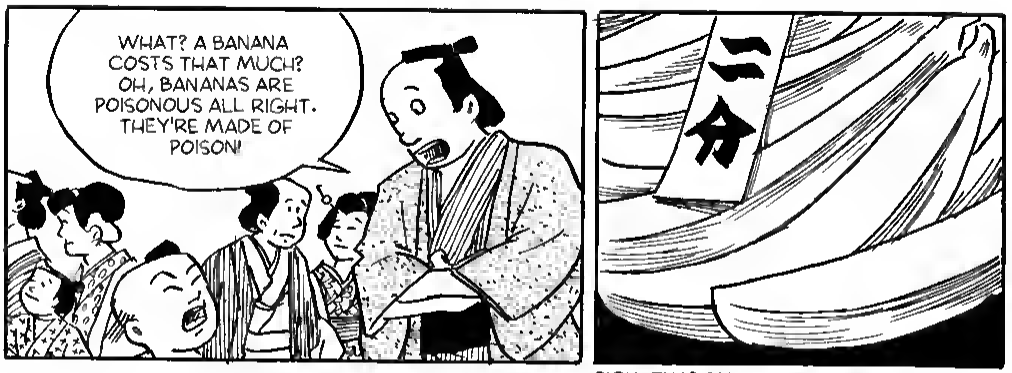

GREAT! I GUESS TALKING THINGS OUT REALLY DOES WORK.
FINE, I'LL TAKE YOU.
HONESTLY, THIS KID...KNOWING HIM, HE COULD PROBABLY DO SOME SERIOUS DAMAGE.
I'LL TAKE YOU WITH ME, BUT YOU CAN'T BEG ME TO BUY YOU ANYTHING.
HEH HEH HEH
WE'RE BOTH RESPON-SIBLE FOR THAT, YOU KNOW.
OUR LUCK REALLY RAN OUT WHEN YOU GAVE BIRTH TO THIS ONE.
MOMMY, YOU HAVE A BETTER KIMONO FOR ME, RIGHT?
I DID, BUT...
'CAUSE THIS ONE'S DIRTY!
OKAY THEN...ASK YOUR MOTHER TO CHANGE YOUR KIMONO.
THERE'S NOTHING ELSE FOR ME TO WEAR?
YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH THAT ONE TODAY.
UNFORTUNATELY, IT'S TUCKED AWAY IN THE BOTTOM OF THE DRESSER.


ENOUGH. LET'S GO.
OKAY!!
WHAT A MOUTH ON THIS ONE! TALKING LIKE I'VE PUT HIS CLOTHES INTO HOCK FOR A FEW DRINKS. ARE YOU FILLING HIS HEAD WITH IDEAS LIKE THAT?
AAAW, IT'S BECAUSE DADDY DRINKS THAT MY OTHER KIMONO'S AT THE SHOP.
AND IF KIN DOESN'T LISTEN TO YOU, GO AHEAD AND TOSS HIM IN THE YODO RIVER. IT'S FINE.
HAVE A GOOD TIME!
BUT THEN YOU'D BE A MURDERER.
I DON'T CARE IF YOU CAN'T SWIM.
BUT I CAN'T SWIM.
SHE SAID I CAN THROW YOU IN THE YODO.

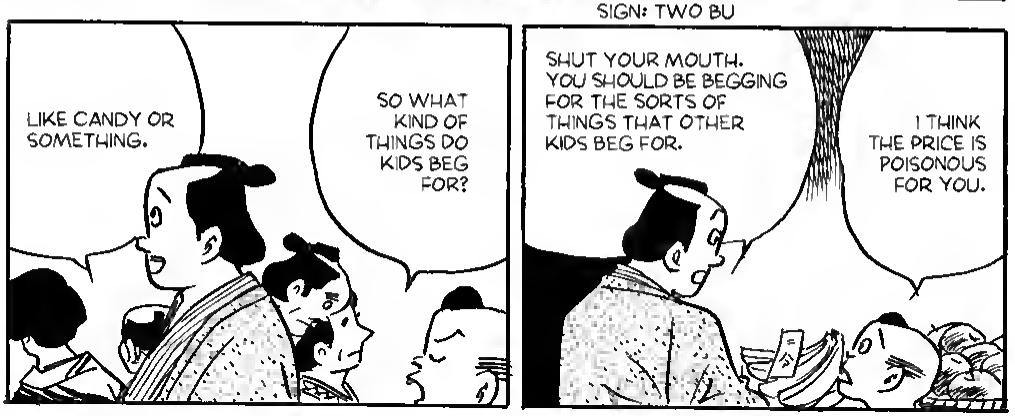

I'M GOING TO SEND YOU WITH HIM.
YOU NEVER LISTEN TO ME. WHEN THE OLD MAN WHO RUNS THE CHARCOAL SHOP HEADS BACK TO THE MOUNTAINS...
HEH HEH HEH!
HONESTLY. YOU HAVE A COME-BACK FOR EVERY-THING. YOU'RE JUST TRYING TO MAKE A FOOL OF YOUR FATHER.
I LOVE THE MOUNTAINS...
WOW... THE MOUNTAINS, HUH?
YOU BETTER NOT CRY WHEN THAT HAPPENS.
AND HE'LL LEAVE YOU UP IN THE MOUNTAINS.
WHAT'S UP THERE?
THE MOUNTAINS ARE SCARY, YOU KNOW.
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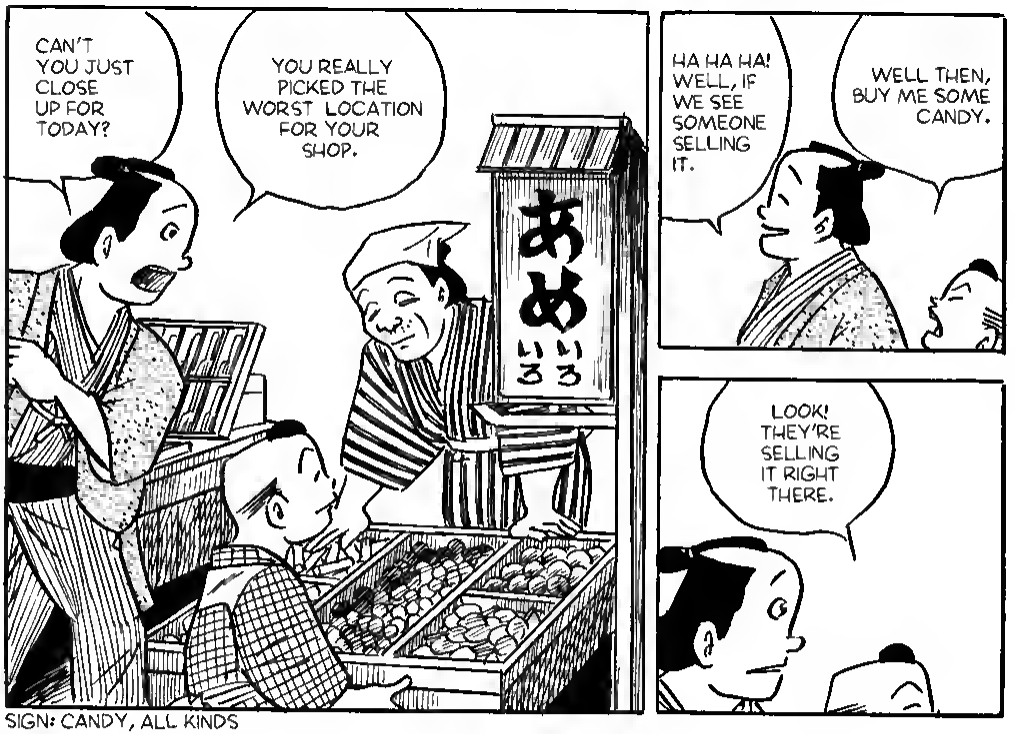

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'D RUN AWAY.
YOU SAY THAT, BUT WHEN THE OLD MAN FROM THE CHARCOAL SHOP COMES FOR YOU, YOU'LL JUST RUN AWAY.
I'D CATCH THE TANUKI AND EAT IT.
WOLVES, TANUKI, OTHER WILD ANIMALS.
HE REALLY DOESN'T MISS A TRICK.
THIS BRAT THINKS HE KNOWS EVERYTHING!
'CAUSE YOU OWE HIM MONEY!
AND JUST WHY WOULD I RUN AWAY?
RIGHT HERE! DELICIOUS BEANS!
SWEET RED BEANS!


IT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN. ASK ALL YOU WANT.
BUY ME SOME-THING.
WHAT?
HEY, DADDY.
C'MON, BUY THAT. THEY'RE SELLING APPLES. BUY ME ONE.
DON'T SAY THAT. BUY ME SOMETHING.
YOU CAN'T HAVE AN APPLE. APPLES ARE POISONOUS.
I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING YET!
HOW ABOUT A BANANA?
POISON-OUS.
OKAY THEN-
ORANGES ARE POISONOUS TOO.
I NEVER HEARD THAT BEFORE. OKAY THEN, AN ORANGE.



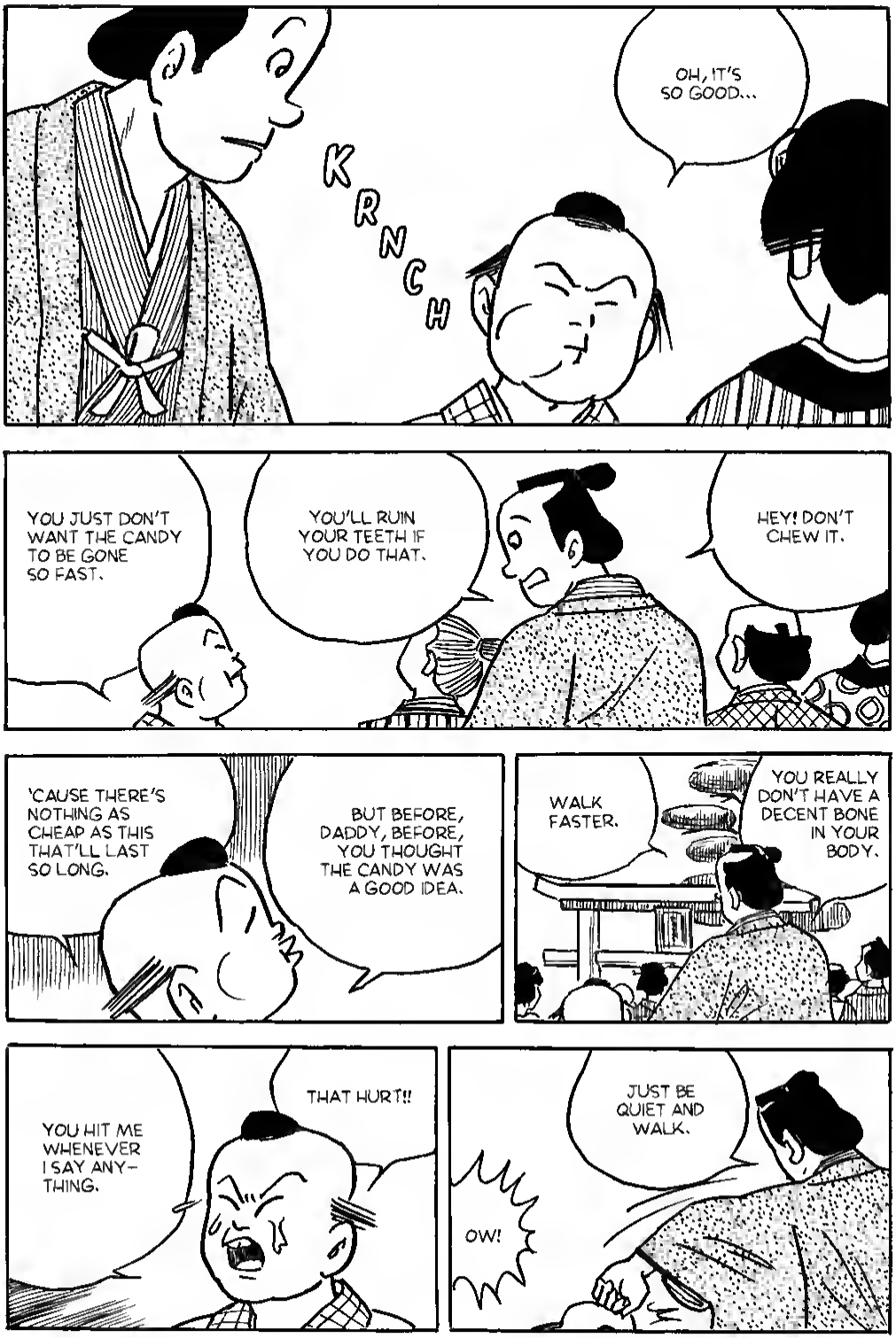
SIGN: TWO BU



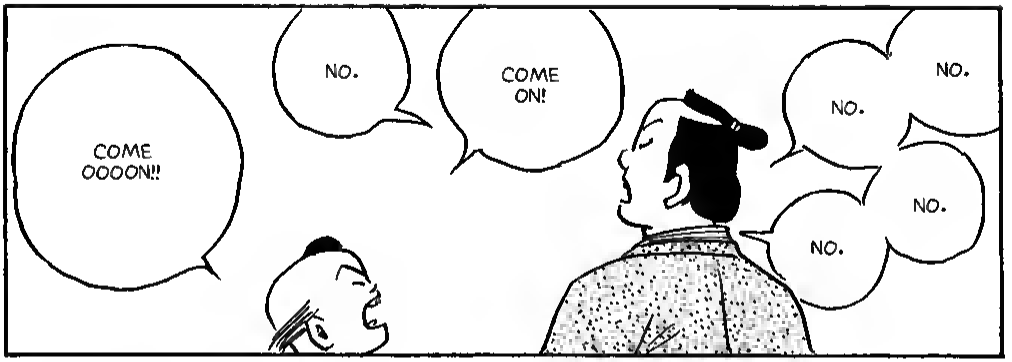


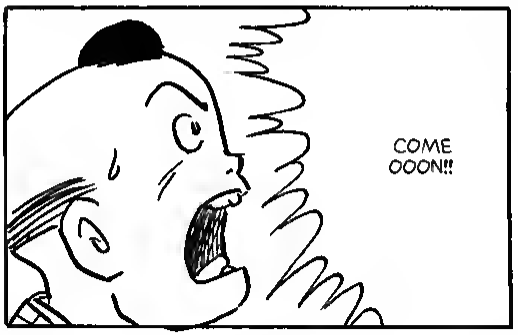
SIGN: CANDY, ALL KINDS

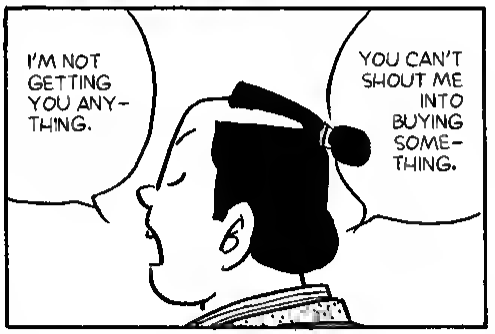

DON'T ENCOURAGE HIM.
LISTEN UP, KID, EVERYTHING YOU SEE HERE IS FOR SALE.
NOT IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE A JERK ABOUT IT!
A QUARTER.
LET'S SEE, HOW MUCH FOR ONE PIECE?
I'LL BUY SOMETHING, ALL RIGHT?
OKAY THEN, CAN WE GET THE BIGGEST ONE YOU'VE GOT IN THERE?
IT'S MORE EMBARRASSING TO BE YOUR KID.
THE WAY YOU TALK...YOU EMBARRASS YOUR POOR DAD, YOU KNOW.
GOOD.
SO, IS IT GOOD?
SEE?
SEE? I BOUGHT THIS FOR YOU.
OPEN UP.

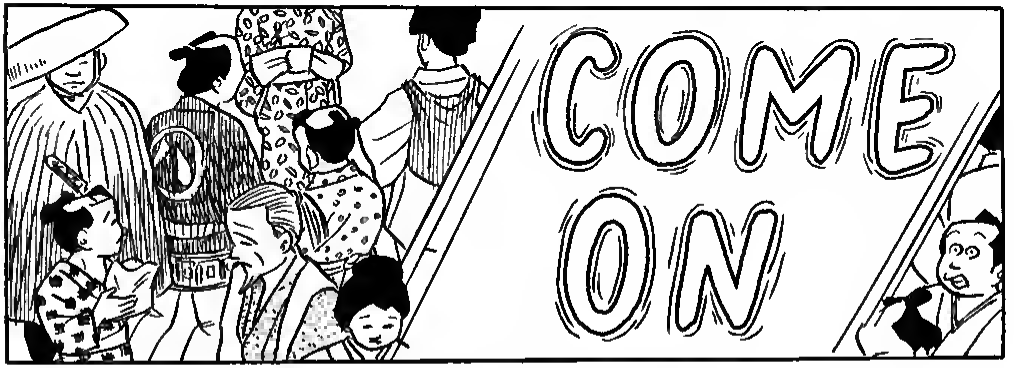

KRNCH
OH, IT'S SO GOOD...
YOU JUST DON'T WANT THE CANDY TO BE GONE SO FAST.
YOU'LL RUIN YOUR TEETH IF YOU DO THAT.
HEY! DON'T CHEW IT.
'CAUSE THERE'S NOTHING AS CHEAP AS THIS THAT'LL LAST SO LONG.
BUT BEFORE, DADDY, BEFORE, YOU THOUGHT THE CANDY WAS A GOOD IDEA.
WALK FASTER.
YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE A DECENT BONE IN YOUR BODY.
YOU HIT ME WHENEVER I SAY ANY-THING.
THAT HURT!!
JUST BE QUIET AND WALK.
OW!


NOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT CANDY I JUST BOUGHT YOU?
PFFT! YOU START RIGHT IN AGAIN, EVEN WHEN YOU'RE SUPPOSEDLY CRYING.
THAT'S ABUSE! YOU BETTER BUY ME SOMETHING!
IT'S NOT ANYWHERE AROUND HERE.
WHAT?
IT FELL BECAUSE YOU HIT ME!
SO YOU ATE IT THEN.
IT FELL INTO MY STOMACH!
COME ON!
COME ON!
COME ON!
COME ON!
COME ON!
COME ON!
YOU'RE SUCH A BAD KID. WHY SHOULD I BUY YOU ANYTHING ELSE?


COME OOOON!!
NO.
COME ON!
NO.
NO.
NO.
NO.

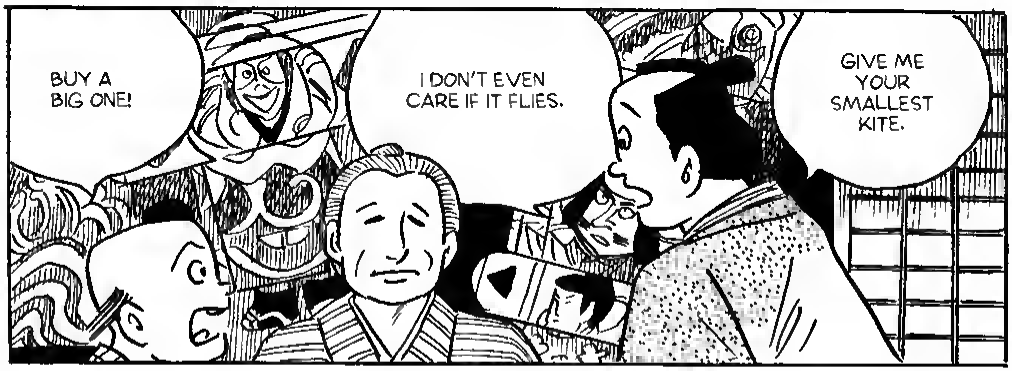

COME OOON!!


I'M NOT GETTING YOU ANY-THING.
YOU CAN'T SHOUT ME INTO BUYING SOME-THING.


COME ON


BUY ME A KITE.
SHOUTING LIKE THAT IN A PLACE LIKE THIS... EVERYONE'S LOOKING.
YOU MEATHEAD.
ALL RIGHT.


OF ALL THE PLACES FOR YOU TO SET UP SHOP! DAMN IT!
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BUY A BIG ONE!
I DON'T EVEN CARE IF IT FLIES.
GIVE ME YOUR SMALLEST KITE.


NOT AT ALL, SIR. ALL THE KITES ARE FOR SALE.
RIGHT? YOU DON'T SELL THOSE BIG ONES. THEY'RE JUST FOR SHOW, *RIGHT*?
THOSE ARE JUST FOR DISPLAY.
HE DOESN'T SELL BIG ONES.


YEAH, HOW ABOUT A FANCY UNARI KITE?!
HOW ABOUT A FANCY UNARI KITE?
BASTARD!
IN FACT, I HAVE SOME LARGER ONES IN THE BACK...
WHAT TH--! DOES THIS GUY HAVE IT IN FOR ME OR WHAT?
AND WILL YOU NEED STRING?
I EVEN SPENT ALL THE MONEY I WAS GOING TO USE TO BUY MYSELF A DRINK ON THE WAY HOME.
GODDAMMIT! HOW'D I END UP BUYING SOMETHING THIS EXPENSIVE?


DADDY, LET'S START FLYING THE KITE HERE, AND THEN GO HOME WITH IT.
NO, DADDY! THERE'S NOWHERE TO FLY A KITE AT HOME.
I'M GOING STRAIGHT TO THE SHRINE TO PAY MY RESPECTS, AND THEN WE'RE GOING HOME.
BE CAREFUL OF THE PEOPLE COMING BY.
OKAY, OKAY. NOW GO WAY BACK WITH IT.
I BOUGHT LOTS OF STRING, SO THAT'S NO PROBLEM.
I SUPPOSE THERE'S NO CHOICE THEN. WE'LL HAVE TO FLY IT HERE.

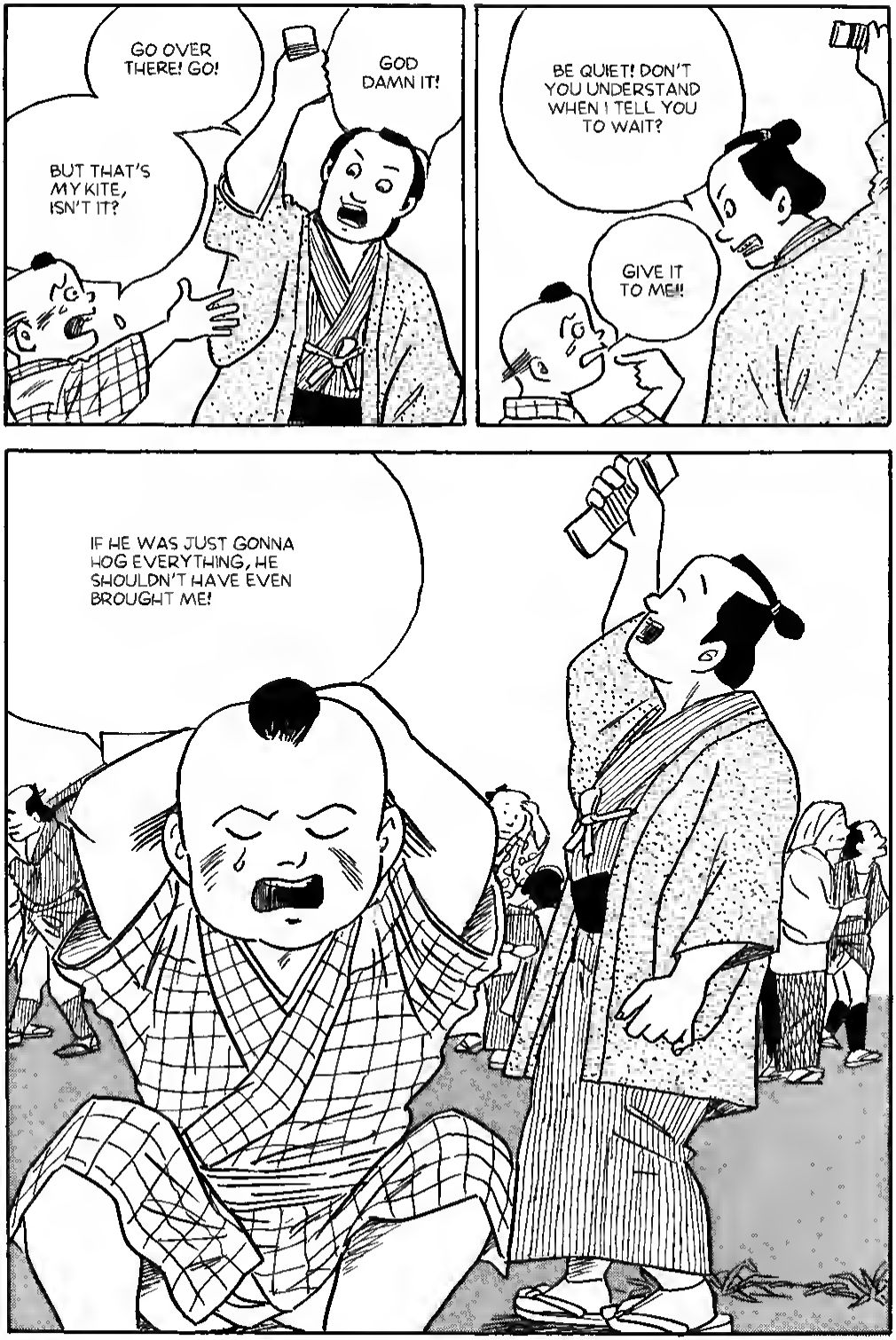

THUD
GO FARTHER.
WAAAH! DADDY, THIS OLD DRUNK IS GONNA BREAK MY KITE!
YOU WANT ME TO BREAK THAT KITE OF YOURS?
WATCH OUT, YOU LITTLE BRAT!
I AM SO SORRY. PLEASE FORGIVE MY SON.
THAT HURTS! OOOOWWW!
...AS YOU CAN HEAR. I HOPE YOU'LL LET IT GO.
THERE'S NOT MUCH GOING ON UPSTAIRS...
KONK


THUD
DON'T CRY JUST BECAUSE THE STREET'S CROWDED, KIN.
I'M VERY SORRY. PLEASE FORGIVE MY FATHER.
I'M VERY SORRY.
YOU'RE THE ONE BUMPING INTO PEOPLE THIS TIME, DADDY.
YOU BRAT! DON'T BE A COPYCAT.
DON'T CRY, DADDY. I'M RIGHT HERE.
ALL RIGHT, I'M GOING TO COUNT TO THREE, AND THEN YOU LET IT GO.


OKAY! LET GO!
ONE! TWO! THREE!
TAK
TAK
TAK
LOOK! SEE? IT'S UP!!
I SHOULD'VE BOUGHT MORE STRING.
HOW ABOUT THAT? THIS KITE IS REALLY SOARING!

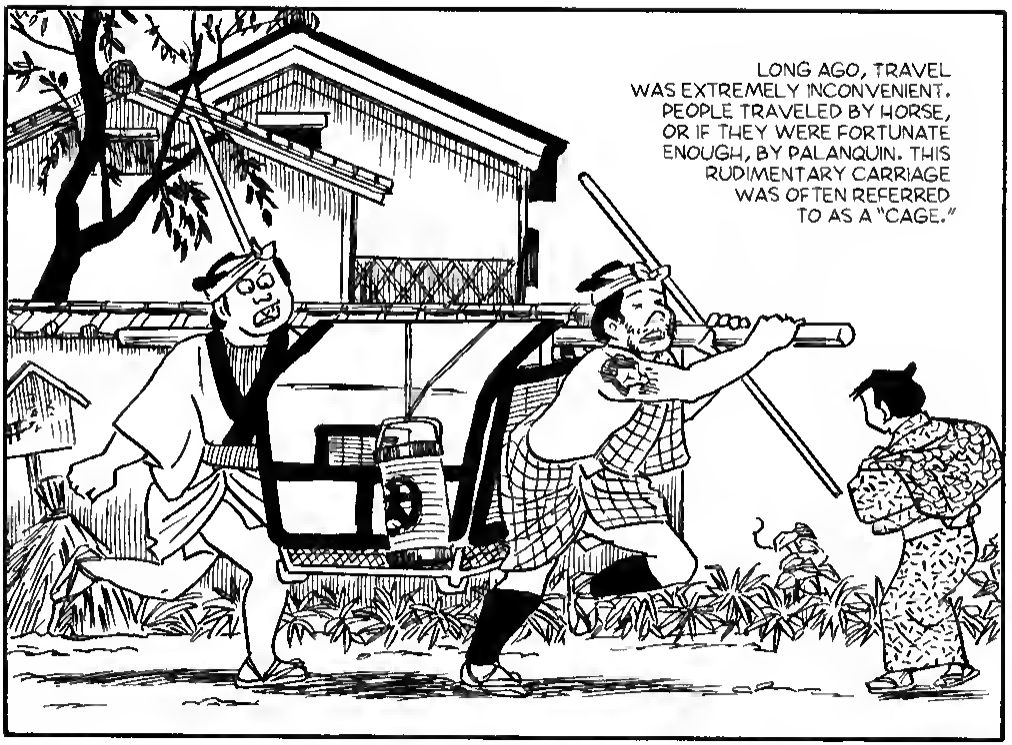

DADDY! LET ME TRY NOW!
LISTEN TO IT BUZZ. THE HARDER YOU PULL, THE LOUDER IT BUZZES.
BZZZZ BZZZZ
LET ME FLY IT, TOO! DADDY!!
IT'S AMAZING! WOW!
THIS IS GREAT!!
I STILL HAVE SOME STRING HERE. I'M TAKING IT HIGHER. IT'S BUZZING LOUDER!!
SEE? THIS IS REALLY GREAT! AH, I FEEL GREAT!
WELL, LOOK HERE! IT'S GOING HIGHER! HIGHER!

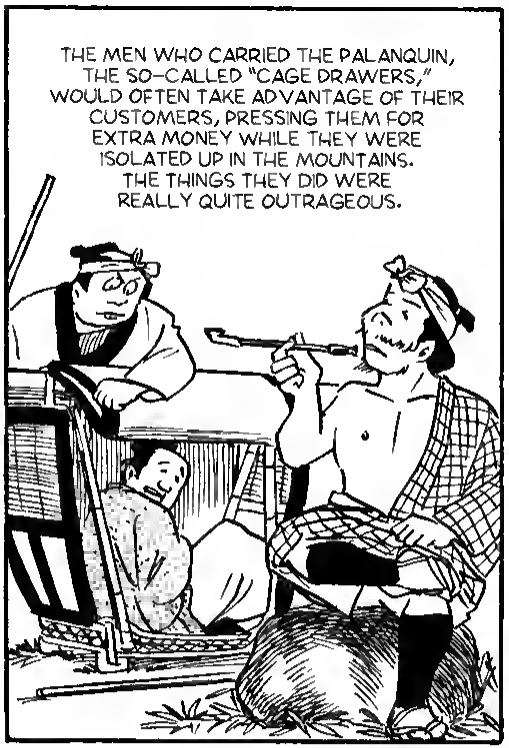

DADDY! HURRY UP AND LET ME...
IT'S BEEN AGES SINCE I'VE FLOWN A KITE. IT'S SO MUCH FUN!
W-WAIT, WAIT!! JUST WAIT!!
DADDY, IT'S MY TURN.
GIVE IT TO ME!!
I TOLD YOU TO WAIT! BZZZ BZZZ!

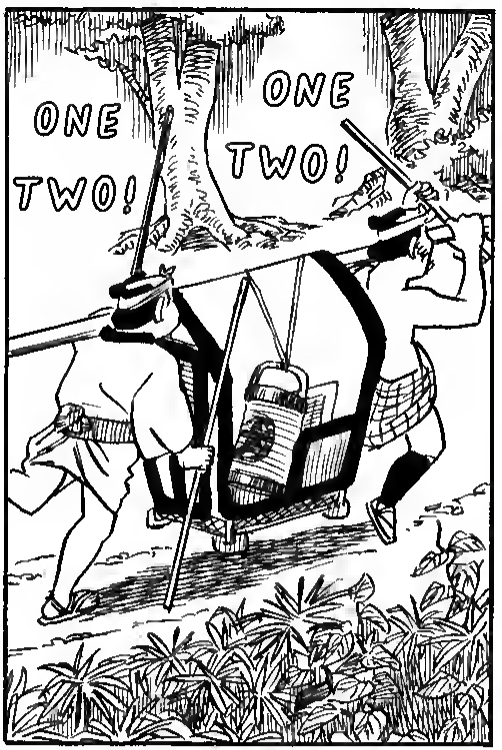

GO OVER THERE! GO!
GOD DAMN IT!
BUT THAT'S MY KITE, ISN'T IT?
BE QUIET! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND WHEN I TELL YOU TO WAIT?
GIVE IT TO ME!!
IF HE WAS JUST GONNA HOG EVERYTHING, HE SHOULDN'T HAVE EVEN BROUGHT ME!

ESCAPE OF THE SPARROWS

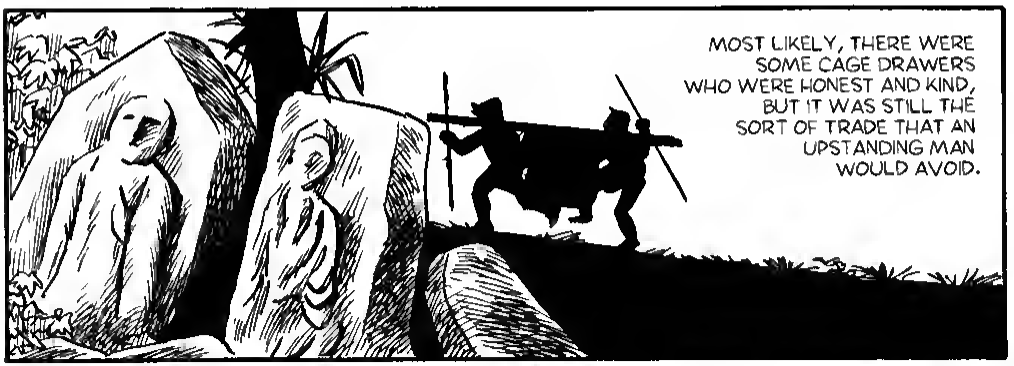



LONG AGO, TRAVEL WAS EXTREMELY INCONVENIENT. PEOPLE TRAVELED BY HORSE, OR IF THEY WERE FORTUNATE ENOUGH, BY PALANQUIN. THIS RUDIMENTARY CARRIAGE WAS OFTEN REFERRED TO AS A "CAGE."


THE MEN WHO CARRIED THE PALANQUIN, THE SO-CALLED "CAGE DRAWERS," WOULD OFTEN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEIR CUSTOMERS, PRESSING THEM FOR EXTRA MONEY WHILE THEY WERE ISOLATED UP IN THE MOUNTAINS. THE THINGS THEY DID WERE REALLY QUITE OUTRAGEOUS.


ONE
TWO!
ONE
TWO!


AS A RESULT, THE CAGE DRAWERS WERE FEARED AND DESPISED, MUCH LIKE THE THIEVES WHO POSED AS FELLOW TRAVELERS AND WAITED ALONG THE ROAD FOR THEIR PREY.


MOST LIKELY, THERE WERE SOME CAGE DRAWERS WHO WERE HONEST AND KIND, BUT IT WAS STILL THE SORT OF TRADE THAT AN UPSTANDING MAN WOULD AVOID.


IN THE CITY OF ODA-WARA...
GOOD DAY! COME, STAY AT OUR INN!
WE HAVE ROOMS AVAILABLE TONIGHT!
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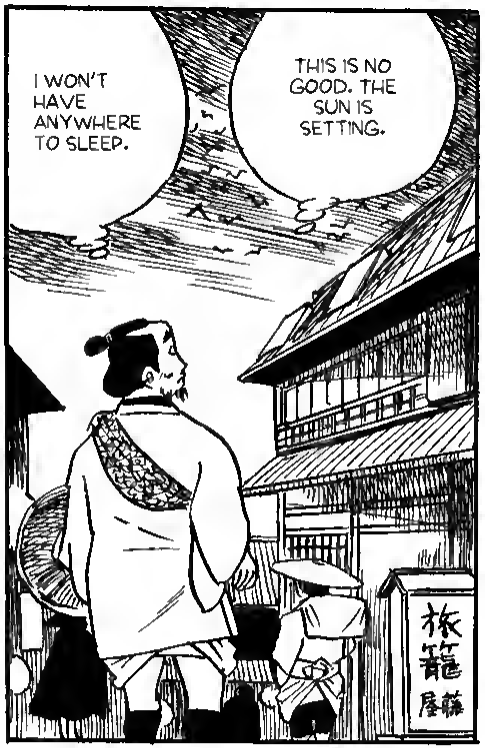
SIGN: INN



SIGN: INN







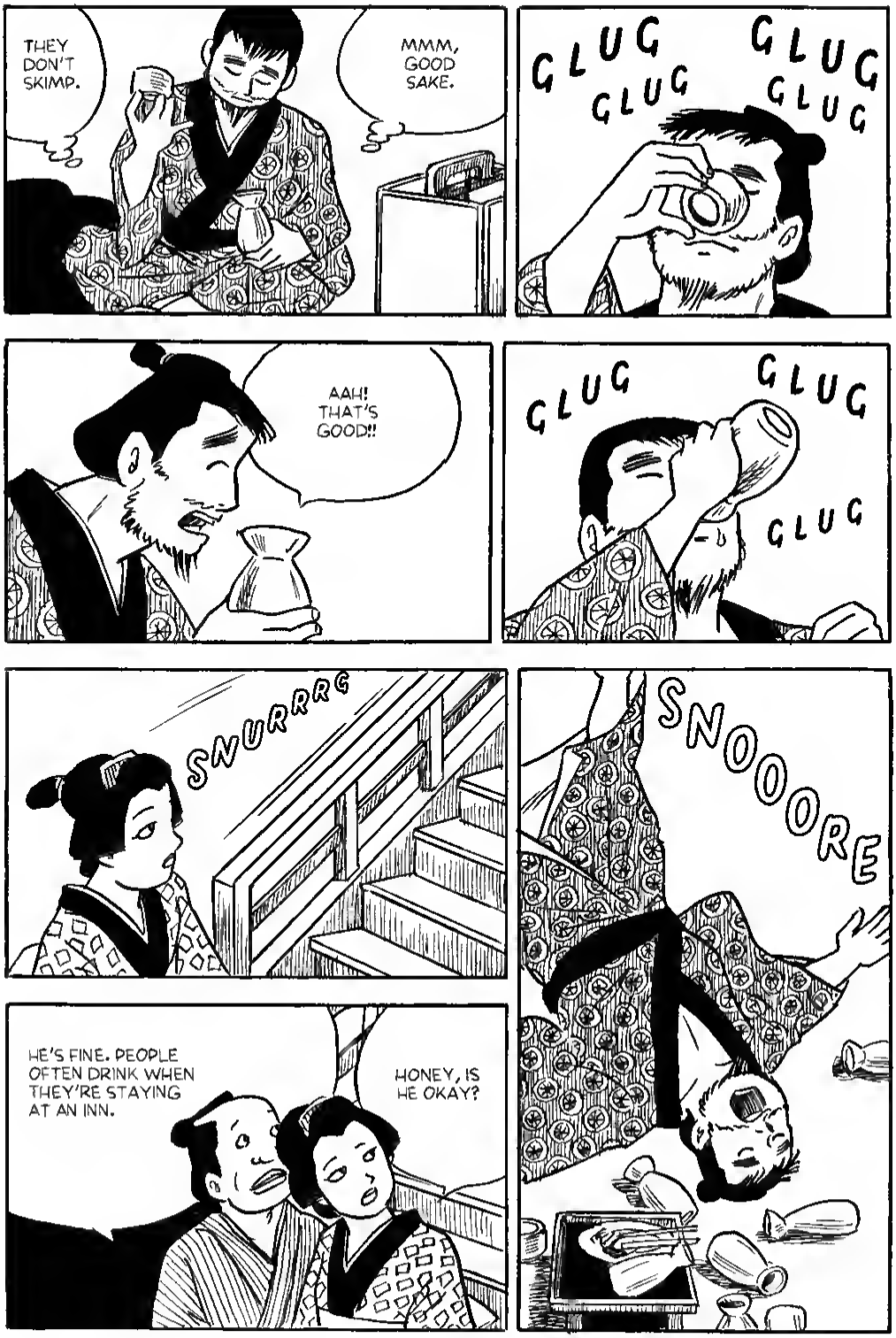




SIGN: INN FUJIYA


ALL RIGHT THEN, I'LL STAY.
YES, SIR. YOU.
ME?
HOW ABOUT OUR INN, SIR?
I'D CERTAINLY BE GLAD TO HAVE YOU STAY.
IS THAT SO, SIR? I'M THE OWNER OF THIS INN.
AND IF I LIKE IT, I MIGHT JUST STAY ON FOR A WHILE.
THAT'S FINE, SIR.
I UNDER-STAND, SIR.
I'D LIKE ONE LARGE BOTTLE IN THE MORNING, ONE AT LUNCH, AND ONE IN THE EVENING. THREE A DAY. ALL RIGHT?
I'M QUITE PARTICULAR ABOUT SAKE, THOUGH.
旅籠
I WILL STAY HERE.
HMM, I LIKE YOU.


OH, NO. NO NEED, SIR. STAY AS LONG AS YOU LIKE, AND WE'LL SETTLE THE BILL AT THE TIME OF YOUR DEPARTURE, SIR.
SHALL I GIVE YOU A HUNDRED RYO AS A DEPOSIT?
YOU MUST BE TIRED FROM YOUR TRAVELS, SIR.
THIS WAY, SIR.
I SEE... ALL RIGHT THEN.
NO, I'LL SKIP THAT. I'LL JUST HAVE A DRINK.
WILL YOU TAKE A BATH, SIR?


THEY DON'T SKIMP.
MMM, GOOD SAKE.
GLUG GLUG GLUG GLUG
AAH! THAT'S GOOD!!
GLUG GLUG GLUG
SNURRRG
SNOOORE
HE'S FINE. PEOPLE OFTEN DRINK WHEN THEY'RE STAYING AT AN INN.
HONEY, IS HE OKAY?


KREEK
COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO
BRING ME SOME SAKE.
MMM. I SLEPT WELL.
ARE YOU AWA-
SNOOOORE
GLUG GLUG GLUG
AAH!


HE DRINKS A BOTTLE OF SAKE MORNING, NOON AND NIGHT. ARE YOU SURE HE CAN PAY?
THE GUEST ON THE SECOND FLOOR'S BEEN HERE SEVEN DAYS ALREADY.
HEY! WHERE'S MY LUNCHTIME SAKE?
RIGHT AWAY, SIR.
DON'T WORRY. HE SAID HE WOULD GIVE ME A HUNDRED RYO AS A DEPOSIT.
JUST ONE LOOK AT HIM AND ANY-ONE WOULD KNOW BETTER. HE DIDN'T EVEN BRING ANY BAGS.
AND WHY NOT?
I CAN'T SAY THAT.
SAY YOU JUST WANT TO GET FIVE RYO AS A DEPOSIT.
YOU CAN'T TRUST HIM. AND WE HAVE TO PAY THE SAKE SHOP. GO AND PUSH HIM A LITTLE.
THEN JUST TELL HIM THAT I TOLD YOU TO ASK HIM.
NO MATTER HOW MANY DAYS OR WEEKS HE STAYS, WE CAN SETTLE THE BILL WHEN HE LEAVES.
I ALREADY TOLD HIM...


OH, I'D JUST ABOUT GIVEN UP ON YOU.
SO SORRY TO HAVE KEPT YOU WAITING...
AH, WHAT A SPOT I'M IN.
THE SAKE'S GETTING COLD. GET UP THERE AND ASK HIM!!
WE HAVE TO PAY THE SAKE SHOP IN CASH, SO SHE'S ASKED ME IF I WOULDN'T ASK YOU FOR JUST FIVE RYO AS A DEPOSIT, IF YOU WOULDN'T MIND...
THE TRUTH IS, SIR, MY WIFE IS REALLY DIGGING INTO ME.
YOU'RE JOKING!! SIR!
I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING LARGER.
WE CAN BREAK SOMETHING LARGER, SIR, SO...
FIVE RYO? I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING THAT SMALL.


BUT SIR... DIDN'T YOU OFFER TO LEAVE A DEPOSIT OF A HUNDRED RYO?
IT'S NOT A JOKE. IT'S THE TRUTH.
I'D PAY IF I HAD IT. I DON'T, SO I CAN'T.
SO-SO THEN YOU REALLY HAVE NOTHING?
I THOUGHT IT WOULD MAKE YOU MORE COMFORTABLE.
YOU'RE FLAT BROKE...?!
NOT A SINGLE CENT?
AND WHEN I SAY I DON'T, I MEAN I REALLY DON'T.
MM, I DON'T.
THIS IS AWFUL! YOU DRANK ALL THIS SAKE! WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO MAKE UP FOR IT?
I WISH I COULD PAY, BUT I CAN'T GIVE YOU WHAT I DON'T HAVE.
FLAT BROKE... THAT'S ONE WAY TO PUT IT.

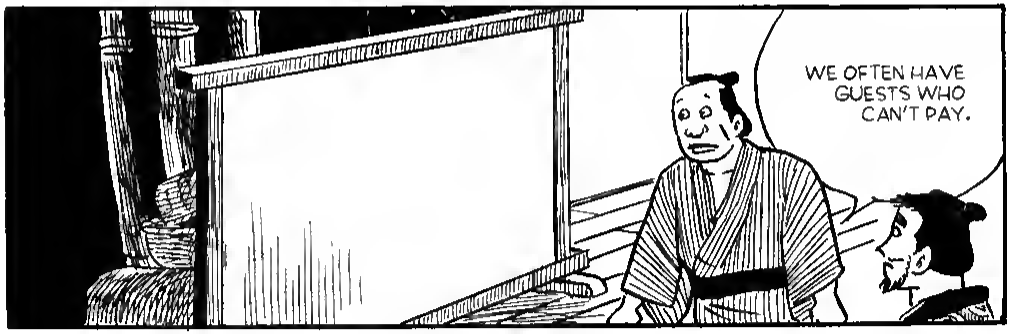

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WHAT AM I GOING TO DO? I CAN'T GIVE BACK SOMETHING I ALREADY DRANK.
IF I HAD EXTRA CLOTHING, I'D OFFER IT TO YOU. BUT THIS IS ALL I'VE GOT, AND IF I GAVE IT TO YOU, I'D HAVE NOTHING TO WEAR.
WHAT'S YOUR TRADE?
WELL THEN, YOU'LL HAVE TO WORK OFF THE COST OF YOUR STAY AND THE SAKE...
AH, THIS IS A TOUGH ONE.
I CAN'T VERY WELL GO AROUND NAKED.
OH, YOU'RE A PAINTER? WELL, THAT'S NO GOOD.
WHY NOT?
I'M AN ARTIST.

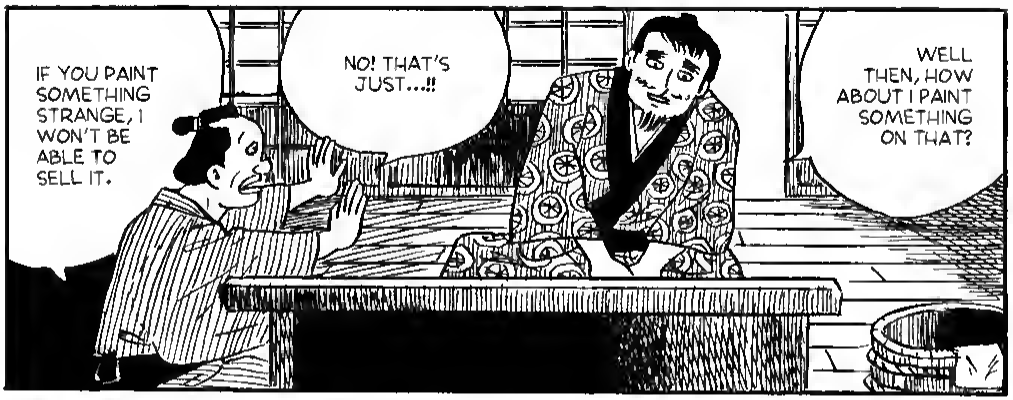

WELL THEN, HOW ABOUT I PAINT YOU SOMETHING JUST AS COLLATERAL?
I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH PAINTINGS ARE WORTH. IT'S NO GOOD.
I WOULDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH ANY-THING YOU PAINTED.

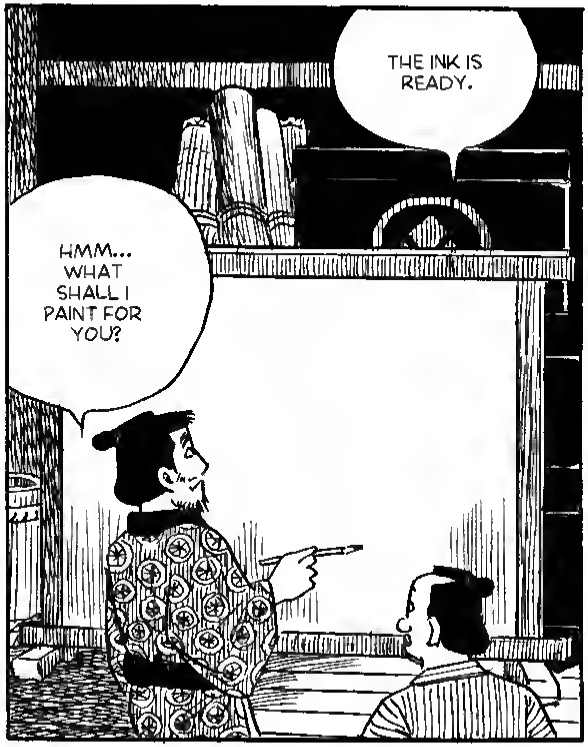

THE SCREEN IN THE HALL-WAY LOOKS NEW. HOW ABOUT I PAINT ON THAT?

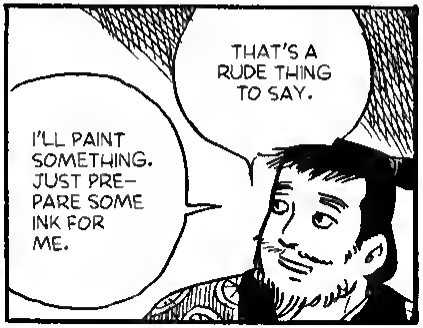

BUT A PAINT-ING...
I WON'T FEEL RIGHT IF I DON'T LEAVE YOU SOMETHING.

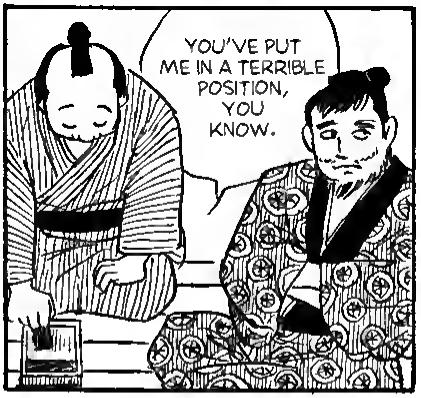

SO HE MADE THE SCREEN UP LIKE THAT. I THOUGHT I MIGHT SELL IT FOR A BIT.
HMM...THAT'S FROM A SCROLL MOUNTER FROM EDO WHO STAYED HERE JUST TEN DAYS AGO. HE WAS BROKE, TOO.


WE OFTEN HAVE GUESTS WHO CAN'T PAY.


IF YOU PAINT SOMETHING STRANGE, I WON'T BE ABLE TO SELL IT.
NO! THAT'S JUST...!!
WELL THEN, HOW ABOUT I PAINT SOMETHING ON THAT?


THE INK IS READY.
HMM... WHAT SHALL I PAINT FOR YOU?


THAT'S A RUDE THING TO SAY.
I'LL PAINT SOMETHING. JUST PREPARE SOME INK FOR ME.


YOU'VE PUT ME IN A TERRIBLE POSITION, YOU KNOW.




...


SSSP
WHAT DO YOU THINK? I DECIDED TO PAINT SPARROWS...
MY...NOW THAT YOU SAY IT, THEY DO LOOK LIKE SPARROWS.


EACH BIRD IS WORTH ONE RYO, SO ALTOGETHER THAT'S FIVE RYO FOR COLLATERAL.
I DREW FIVE OF THEM...
I'LL LEAVE THEM HERE AS COLLATERAL. YOU MUSTN'T SELL THEM.
THESE BIRDS ARE DIFFERENT.
AT THE BIRD SHOP OVER THERE, YOU CAN GET A CHICKEN THIS BIG-
THIS SORT OF SPARROW, WELL...ONE RYO IS A LOT FOR ONE BIRD.
BECAUSE YOU'RE A TERRIBLE JUDGE OF CHAR-ACTER.
AAAAH! WHY DO ALL THE DEADBEATS END UP STAYING HERE?
I'LL STOP IN ON MY WAY HOME.
THANK YOU FOR EVERY-THING.
旅籠

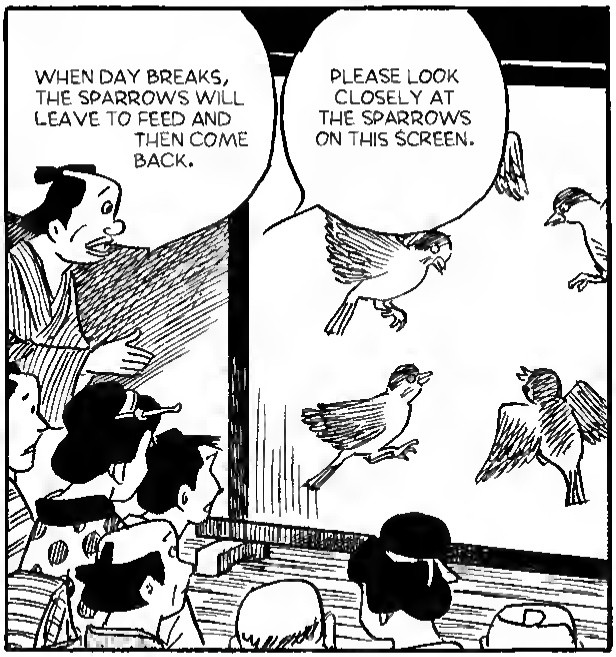

HEY! WAKE UP, WAKE UP!
AAAH... I DON'T WANT TO.
THE NEXT MORNING...
COME UP TO THE SECOND FLOOR!
ON THE SECOND FLOOR!
THAT GUY WAS HERE FOR SEVEN DAYS, DRINKING FOR FREE...
I'M TIRED OF GETTING UP AND WORKING.
WHAT ON EARTH IS IT?
IT'S REALLY SOMETHING!!
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO THAT SCREEN?

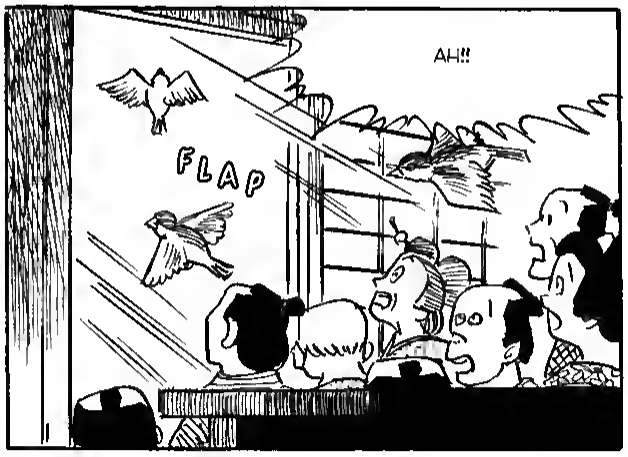

AH!!
CHEEP
CHEEP
CHEEEP
CHEE
CHEE
AND LOOK! THEY'RE EATING ON THE NEIGH-BOR'S ROOF!
SO I'M NOT DREAMING? IT'S REALLY HAPPENING?
THE SPARROWS FROM THE SCREEN ARE ESCAPING?!


IT'S SO STRANGE...
IS THIS EVEN POSSIBLE?!
THEY ARE!!
LOOK! ALL THE SPARROWS ARE GONE FROM THE SCREEN!
CHEEP
CHEEP
CHEEP
OH! THEY'RE COMING BACK!
INCREDIBLE...
ALL FIVE OF THEM FLEW BACK INTO THE SCREEN AFTER EATING.

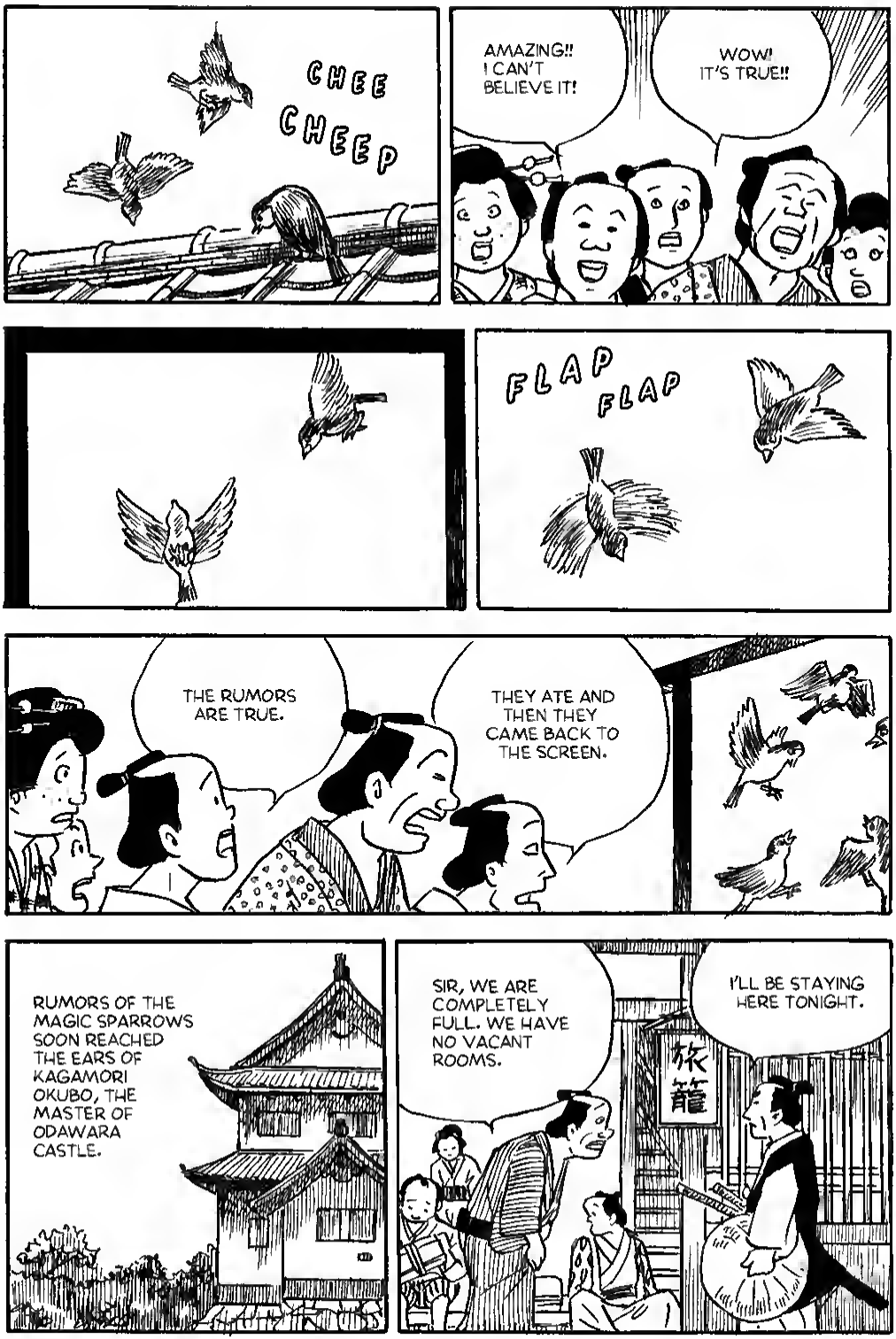

NEWS OF THE INCREDIBLE SPARROWS TRAVELED FAR, AND SOON THE TOWN OF ODAWARA WAS FILLED WITH CURIOUS VISITORS.
繪草紙
亀屋
地本錦


I'M OPENING THE SHUTTERS.
KLATTER


WHEN DAY BREAKS, THE SPARROWS WILL LEAVE TO FEED AND THEN COME BACK.
PLEASE LOOK CLOSELY AT THE SPARROWS ON THIS SCREEN.


AH!!
FLAP

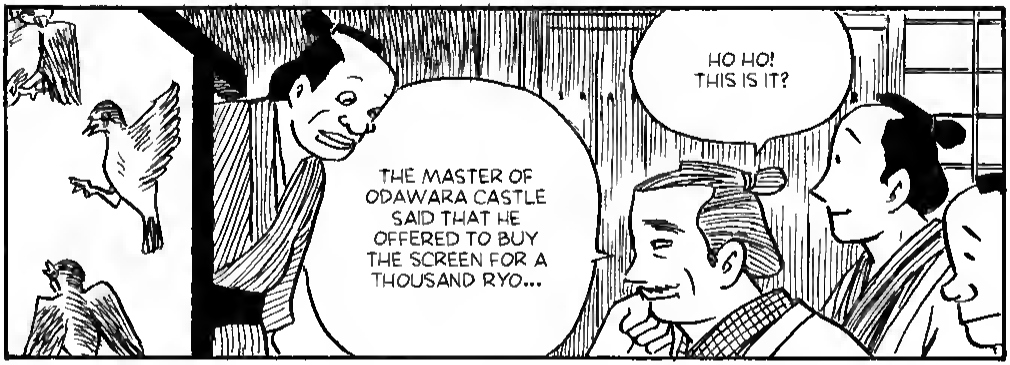

CHEEEP
CHEE
CHEE


CHEE
CHEEP
AMAZING!! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
WOW! IT'S TRUE!!
FLAP
FLAP
THE RUMORS ARE TRUE.
THEY ATE AND THEN THEY CAME BACK TO THE SCREEN.
RUMORS OF THE MAGIC SPARROWS SOON REACHED THE EARS OF KAGAMORI OKUBO, THE MASTER OF ODAWARA CASTLE.
SIR, WE ARE COMPLETELY FULL. WE HAVE NO VACANT ROOMS.
I'LL BE STAYING HERE TONIGHT.
旅籠

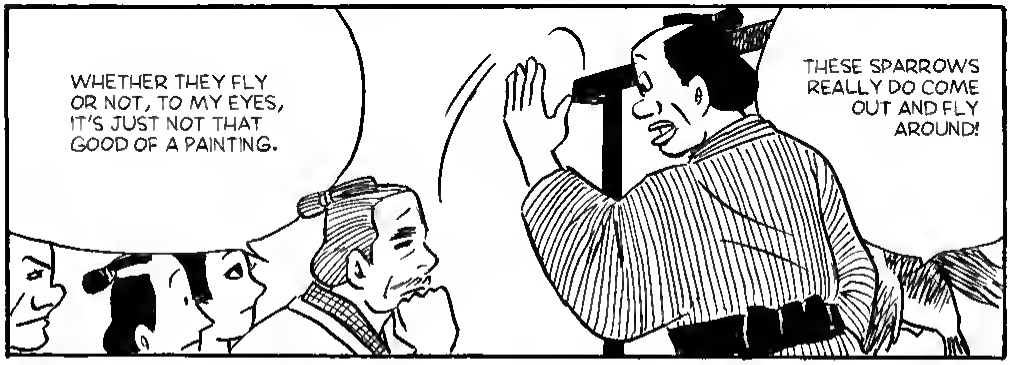

I SEE. THIS REALLY IS A RARE SCREEN.
旅籠
I SINCERELY AND DEEPLY REGRET THIS, SIR, BUT I AM UNABLE TO OFFER THIS SCREEN TO YOU UNTIL THE BRILLIANT ARTIST WHO PAINTED IT RETURNS.
A-A THOU-SAND RYO?!
I'D LIKE TO BUY IT FROM YOU FOR A THOUSAND RYO. WHAT DO YOU SAY?
I LOVE IT.
MY SINCEREST APOLOGIES, SIR.
IN THAT CASE, I'LL BUY IT FROM YOU WHEN THE ARTIST COMES BACK.
IS THAT SO? I UNDERSTAND.

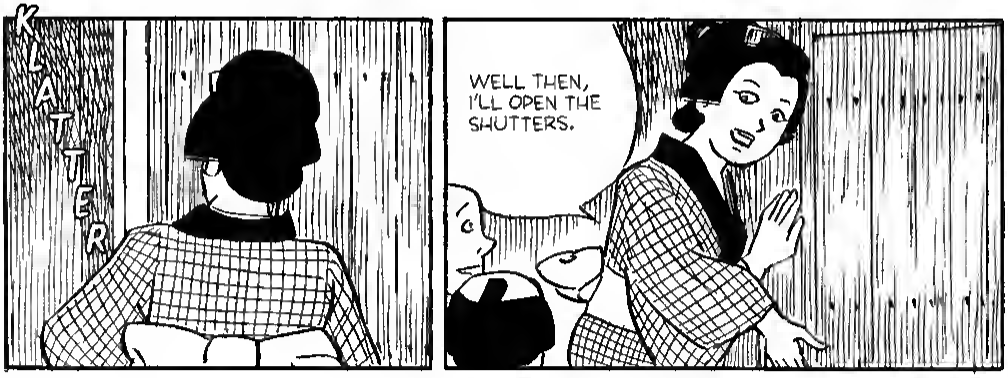

HE DID. THIS HAS REALLY TURNED INTO SOMETHING.
HONEY, DID HE SAY A THOUSAND RYO FOR THIS PAINTING?
YES, SIR!!
ALL RIGHT?
THE RUMORS GREW INTO MORE RUMORS, AND EACH MORNING, THE GUESTS WHO FILLED "THE SPARROW INN" GATHERED AROUND THE SCREEN TO DELIGHT IN THE BIRDS' ESCAPE.
YES, IT IS, SIR.
IS THIS THE PLACE WHERE THE SPARROWS FLY OUT OF THE SCREEN?
MM, EXCUSE ME.
I APOLOGIZE FOR THE TROUBLE, BUT I'D LIKE TO SEE THE SPARROWS WHEN THEY FLY OUT TONIGHT.
OH, THEY FLY OUT IN THE MORNING, SIR.

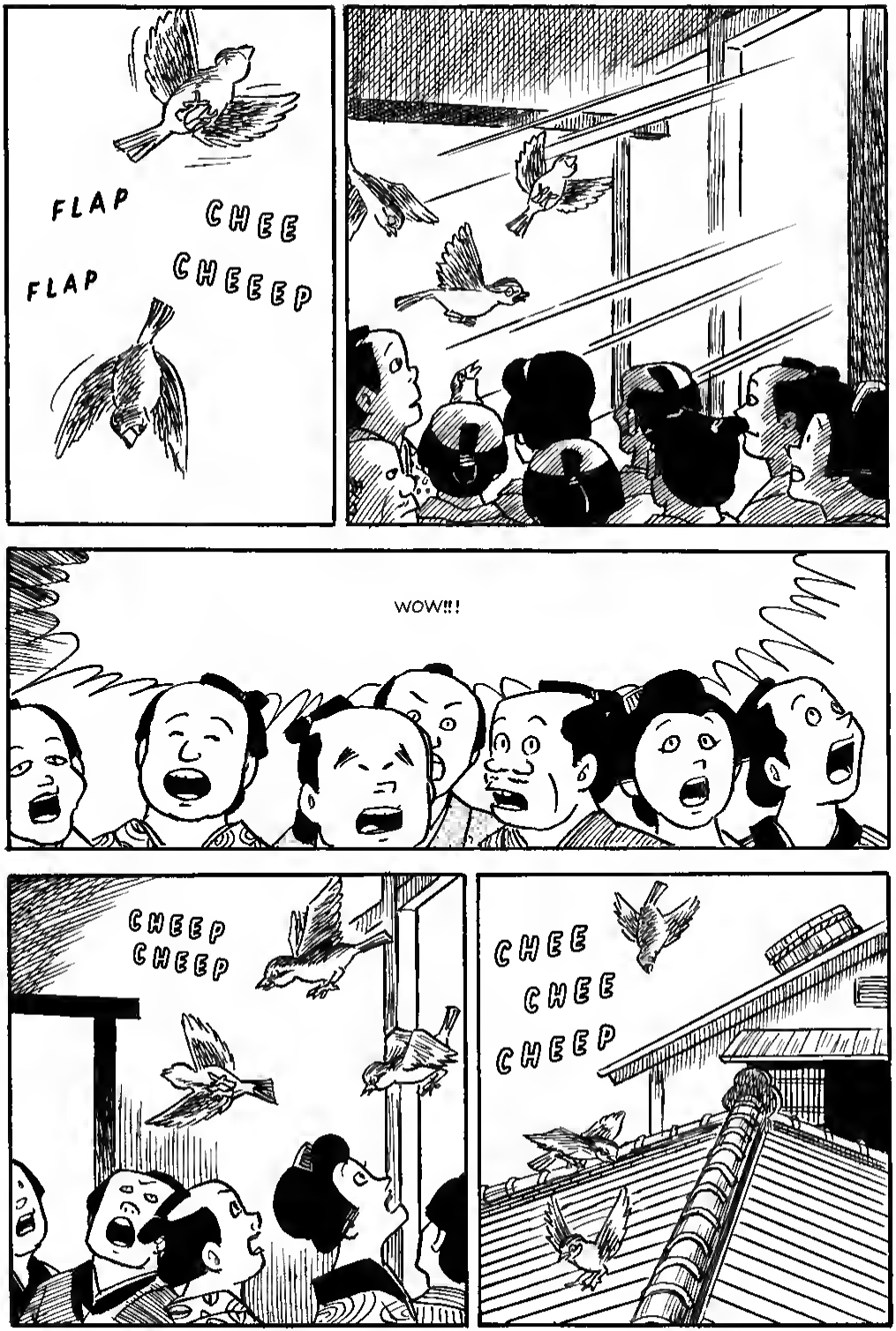

THEY DO? WELL, I'LL LOOK FORWARD TO THE MORNING THEN.
THEY FLY OUT THE MOMENT WE OPEN THE SHUTTERS AND THE SUNLIGHT HITS THEM...
THE NEXT MORNING...
WELL, OUR INN IS FAMOUS NOW, AFTER ALL.
HE'S BROUGHT AN ATTENDANT. WHAT A FINE SAMURAI!
WE'LL BE OPENING THE SHUTTERS SOON, SO PLEASE DO NOT PUSH. JUST BE PATIENT A MOMENT LONGER.


THE MASTER OF ODAWARA CASTLE SAID THAT HE OFFERED TO BUY THE SCREEN FOR A THOUSAND RYO...
HO HO! THIS IS IT?


YOU MUSTN'T SAY THAT, SIR.
MMM, WELL...IT'S NOT MUCH BETTER THAN A LAYMAN'S WORK, IS IT?


WHETHER THEY FLY OR NOT, TO MY EYES, IT'S JUST NOT THAT GOOD OF A PAINTING.
THESE SPARROWS REALLY DO COME OUT AND FLY AROUND!


KATTER
WELL THEN, I'LL OPEN THE SHUTTERS.


FLAP
CHEE
FLAP
CHEEEP
WOW!!!
CHEEP
CHEEP
CHEE
CHEE
CHEEP


THE STORIES I HEARD WERE NO EXAGGERATION. THAT'S AN AMAZING PAINTING.
FLAP
FLAP
THE MAN WHO PAINTED THESE SPARROWS... HE WAS TWENTY-FIVE OR TWENTY-SIX, PALE, PUDGY...YES?
HOW DID YOU KNOW...
HOWEVER, THIS IS ABOUT THE EXTENT OF HIS ABILITIES. HE STILL HAS A LOT TO LEARN.
THE MAN I'M THINKING OF PAINTS JUST LIKE THIS.


AND BY "FADE," YOU MEAN...
SOON THOSE SPARROWS WILL START TO FADE.
THEY CAN'T! TO HAVE SOMETHING WORTH A THOUSAND RYO DIE...
W-WHY?
THEY'LL DIE.
IF THEY HAVE NO PLACE TO PERCH, THE SPARROWS WILL GROW TIRED AND FADE, NOW WON'T THEY?
IF YOU'RE GOING TO PAINT SOMETHING LIKE THIS, YOU HAVE TO PAINT A PLACE FOR THEM TO REST THEIR WINGS.
OOH! IS THAT WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?


HMM, IF I HAD A BRUSH, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
YES, AND SOON THEY WILL DIE.
WHAT IF I CAN'T SELL THE SPARROWS BECAUSE YOU'VE ADDED TO THE PAINTING...?
THAT'S IT! I'LL PAINT A TREE FOR THEM.
WELL, THAT WOULD BE A PROBLEM. PLEASE DO WHATEVER YOU CAN.
IF I DON'T PAINT IT, THE SPARROWS WILL DIE.
YES, SIR.
RYOSUKE, AN INKSTONE AND A BRUSH...
THEN I'LL PAINT THE TREE.


MMM...
I'VE PREPARED THE INK, SIR.
CHEEP CHEEP
AH!!
...
GOOD! NOW'S MY CHANCE.
THE SPARROWS ARE LEAVING?!

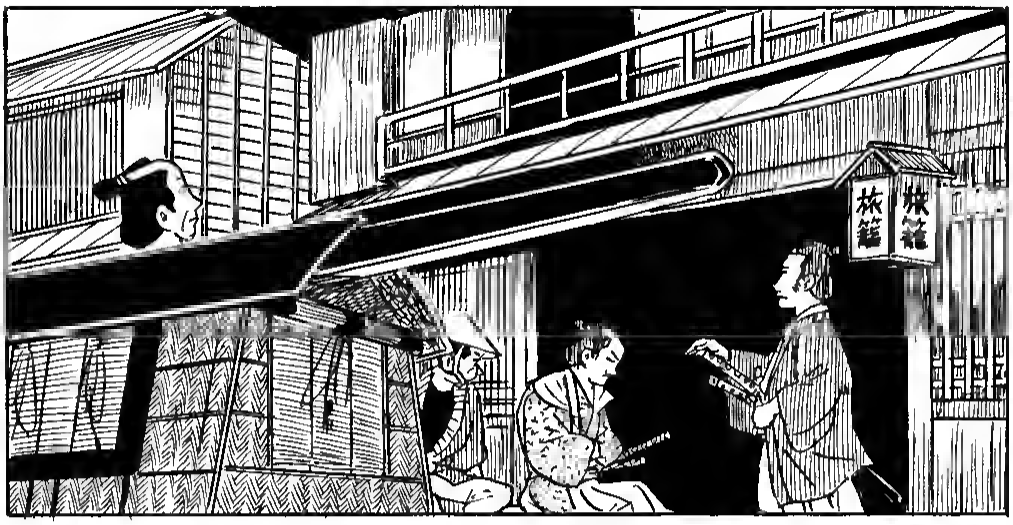

AND WHAT IS IT?
GOOD. THAT'S IT, THEN.
FSSSH
A BIRD CAGE. I DREW A BRANCH INSIDE FOR THEM TO PERCH UPON.
THE SPARROWS WILL COME BACK NOW, AND GO INTO THE CAGE.
FLAP FLAP
CHEEP CHEEP
THEY'RE COMING BACK.


WHAT DO YOU THINK? NOW THE SPARROWS WON'T DIE.
THEY'VE LANDED ON THE BRANCH!!


THANK YOU VERY MUCH, SIR.


YOU WERE WATCHING?
INCREDIBLE, ISN'T IT, HONEY?


NOW THAT THE SPARROWS WERE FLYING OUT OF A CAGE, THE CROWDS GREW EVEN LARGER, WITH RENEWED ENTHUSIASM.
旅籠


旅籠
旅籠


WITH THE SPARROWS AND THE CAGE TOGETHER, I'LL BUY THIS FROM YOU FOR TWO THOUSAND RYO.
WHAT? I'M AFRAID THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE.


THE MAN WHO PAINTED THE SPARROWS AND THE MAN WHO PAINTED THE CAGE...BOTH TRULY WONDERFUL ARTISTS.


IN THAT CASE, WHEN THE MAN WHO PAINTED THESE SPARROWS RETURNS, I'LL BUY THEM FROM YOU.
ALTHOUGH THE CAGE ON THE SCREEN BELONGS TO ME, I WAS TOLD THAT I MUSTN'T SELL THE SPARROWS.

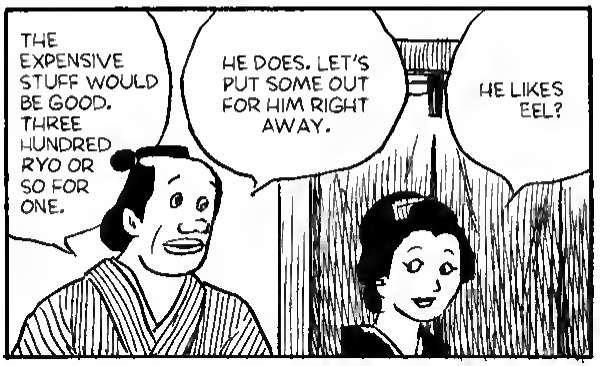

IT'S LIKE A DREAM, HONEY.
HOW ABOUT THAT? TWO THOUSAND RYO!
THANK YOU, SIR.
I LOOK FORWARD TO IT.
WHEN HE COMES BACK, WE HAVE TO TAKE SPECIAL CARE OF HIM.
BUT STILL, I WONDER WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THAT MAN.
IT'LL ALL WORK OUT. I WISH HE'D COME BACK SOON, THOUGH.
HE LOVES SAKE, SO WE NEED TO BRING HIM TWO BOTTLES MORNING, NOON AND NIGHT. THEN HE'LL BE IN A GOOD MOOD AND GIVE US MORE SPARROWS
WELCOME, WELCOME.
SIR, WE HAVE A NEW GUEST.

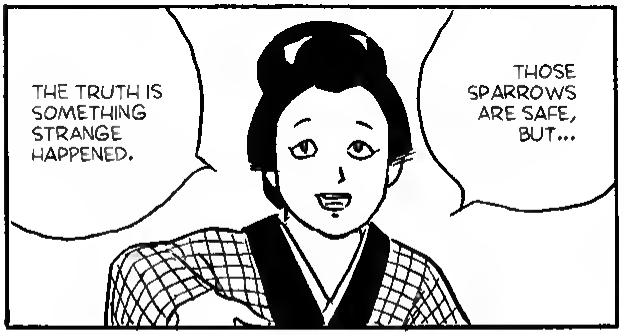

OHHH... AND WHO WOULD YOU BE, SIR?
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
OH!! THE DRUNK WITHOUT A CENT TO HIS NAME!
THE PENNILESS MAN WHO STAYED AT THIS INN FOR SEVEN DAYS, DRANK SAKE AND PAINTED SPARROWS.
THE MASTER OF ODAWARA CASTLE CAME TO ME AND OFFERED TO BUY THEM FOR TWO THOUSAND RYO, BUT I REFUSED.
THEY ARE, SIR.
ARE THE SPARROWS ALL RIGHT?
WELCOME, SIR! IT'S GOOD TO HAVE YOU BACK.


HA HA HA! YOU CAN HAVE THOSE SPARROWS.
YOU'RE AN HONEST MAN, AREN'T YOU?
YOU TOLD ME I MUSTN'T SELL THEM AND I PROMISED...
WHY DIDN'T YOU SELL THEM?
OH MY, THE SPARROWS! I'M SO HAPPY!
HEY, HE SAID WE COULD HAVE THE SPARROWS!
THANK YOU, SIR.
YOU'LL GIVE THEM TO ME?
YOU DIDN'T!
I'VE PUT SAKE IN THE BUCKET HERE, SO PLEASE GET IN AND FEEL FREE TO DRINK WHILE YOU ARE BATHING.
I'LL HAVE A BATH FIRST.
ER, WILL YOU HAVE SAKE, SIR? OR WOULD YOU PREFER A BATH?

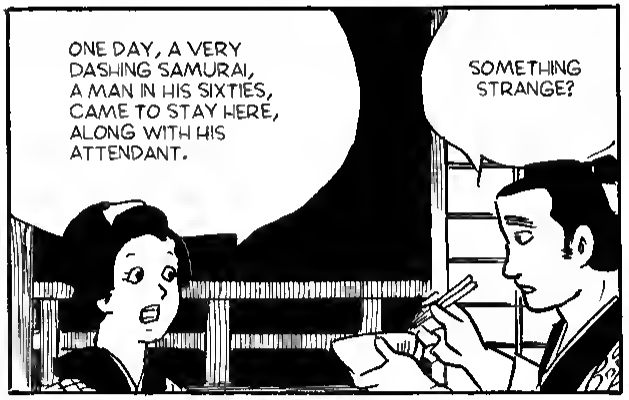

IS EEL, SIR? GOODNESS!
SO, YOUR FAVORITE MEAL...


IS THERE EVEN EEL THAT EXPENSIVE?


THE EXPENSIVE STUFF WOULD BE GOOD. THREE HUNDRED RYO OR SO FOR ONE.
HE DOES. LET'S PUT SOME OUT FOR HIM RIGHT AWAY.
HE LIKES EEL?


THE TRUTH IS SOMETHING STRANGE HAPPENED.
THOSE SPARROWS ARE SAFE, BUT...


...BUT ANYWAY, WELL, IT'S WONDERFUL THAT YOU'VE RETURNED.

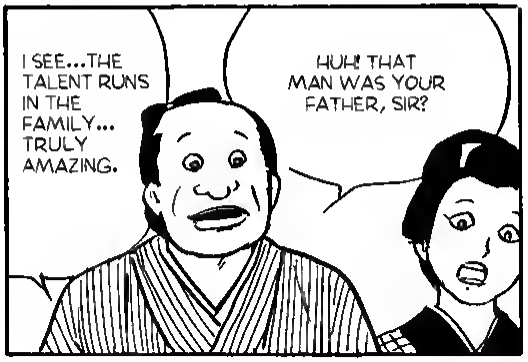

ONE DAY, A VERY DASHING SAMURAI, A MAN IN HIS SIXTIES, CAME TO STAY HERE, ALONG WITH HIS ATTENDANT.
SOMETHING STRANGE?

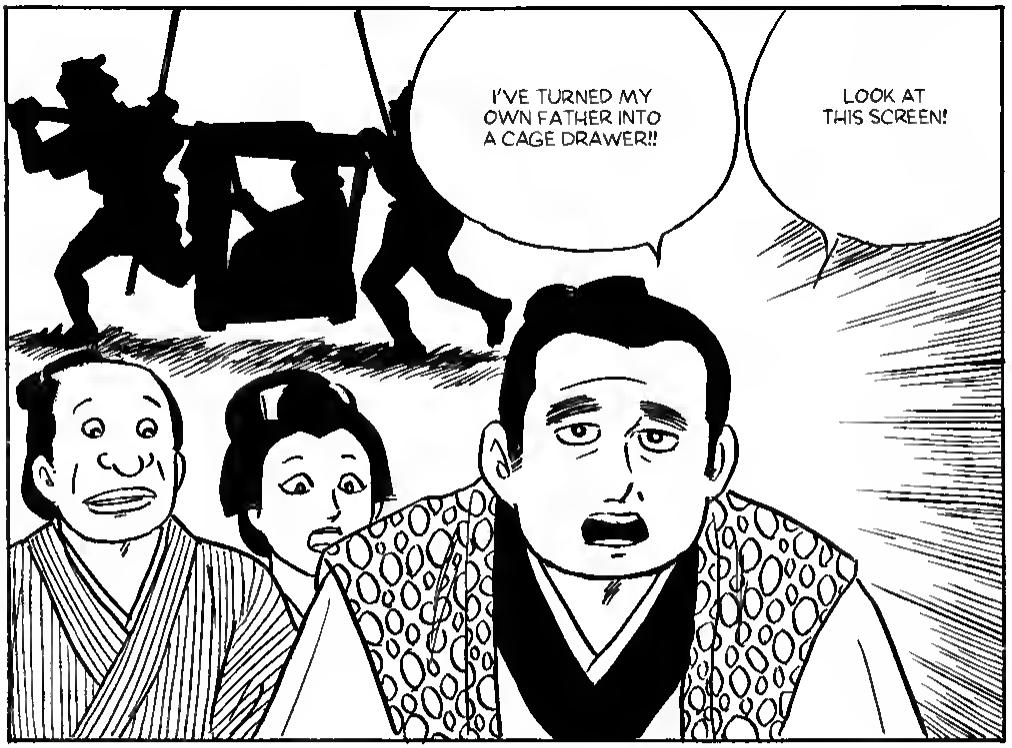

...HE TOLD US.
LEFT LIKE THIS, THE SPARROWS WILL GET TIRED AND DIE.
THE MAN WHO PAINTED THESE SPARROWS WAS TWENTY-FIVE, TWENTY-SIX, WASN'T HE? WHY DIDN'T HE ALSO PAINT A TREE FOR THEM TO SIT ON?
HMM...AND THEN WHAT HAPPENED?
WHY DIDN'T YOU PAINT A TREE FOR THEM TO SIT ON?
I WAS SURPRISED TOO, BUT...
I SEE.
THIS OLDER GENTLEMAN SAID THAT HE WOULD PAINT A TREE AND A CAGE FOR THEM, AND THEN HE DID JUST THAT, SIR.
RIGHT THIS WAY, SIR.
I'D LIKE TO SEE THE CAGE.
...HMM.


HERE IT IS!
I HUMBLY BEG YOUR FORGIVENESS FOR MY UNDUTIFUL WAYS.
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.
YOU ARE A WONDERFUL TREASURE TO ME. PLEASE ACCEPT MY SINCEREST APOLOGIES.


MMM...THE TRUTH IS, THE MAN WHO DREW THIS CAGE IS MY FATHER.
WHAT'S THE MATTER, SIR? YOU'RE BOWING SO LOW BEFORE THE SCREEN.


HOW IS THAT, SIR?
BUT I'VE BEEN VERY NEGLIGENT IN MY FILIAL DUTIES.


I SEE...THE TALENT RUNS IN THE FAMILY... TRULY AMAZING.
HUH! THAT MAN WAS YOUR FATHER, SIR?


I'VE TURNED MY OWN FATHER INTO A CAGE DRAWER!!
LOOK AT THIS SCREEN!

FIERY SPIRITS





SIGN: GETA STRAP WHOLESALER





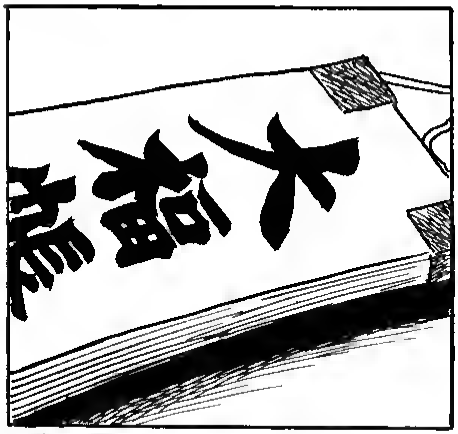

NO...I COULDN'T.
TAKE YOUR TIME. ENJOY YOURSELF A BIT.
I'LL COME STRAIGHT HOME WHEN IT'S OVER.
HAVE A GOOD TIME.
GOOD IDEA. LET'S GO.
WHAT DO YOU SAY WE HEAD OVER TO THE RED-LIGHT DISTRICT?
LATER THAT NIGHT, THE MEN CONCLUDED THEIR MEETING AND DECIDED TO HAVE AN AFTERPARTY.
うきなう
YOU KNOW HOW MY WIFE IS...
I'D LIKE TO, BUT...
HOW ABOUT IT, TACHIBANA? YOU SHOULD COME, TOO.

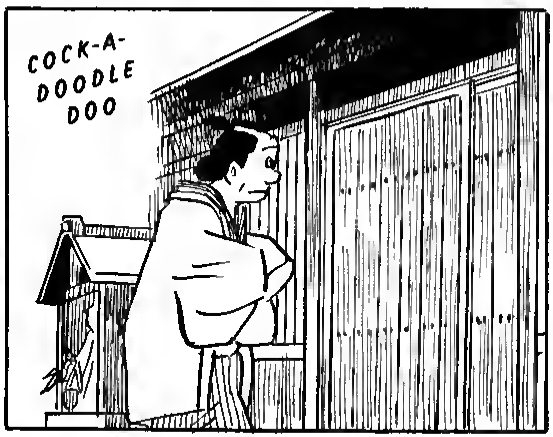

COME ON, IT'S FINE! LET'S GO, LET'S GO!
YOUR WIFE AGAIN? TACHIBANA, YOU NEED TO SPEND TIME WITH YOUR FRIENDS, TOO.
BUT ...


HA HA HA! TACHIBANA'S SPEECHLESS!
WHOA!
SO WHAT DO YOU THINK, TACHIBANA? YOU SEE AN *OIRAN* YOU LIKE?
NO...UH, NOT REALLY...
O-OIRAN!!
THIS IS PARADISE. PURE PARADISE.
I HAD NO IDEA A WORLD LIKE THIS EVEN EXISTED.

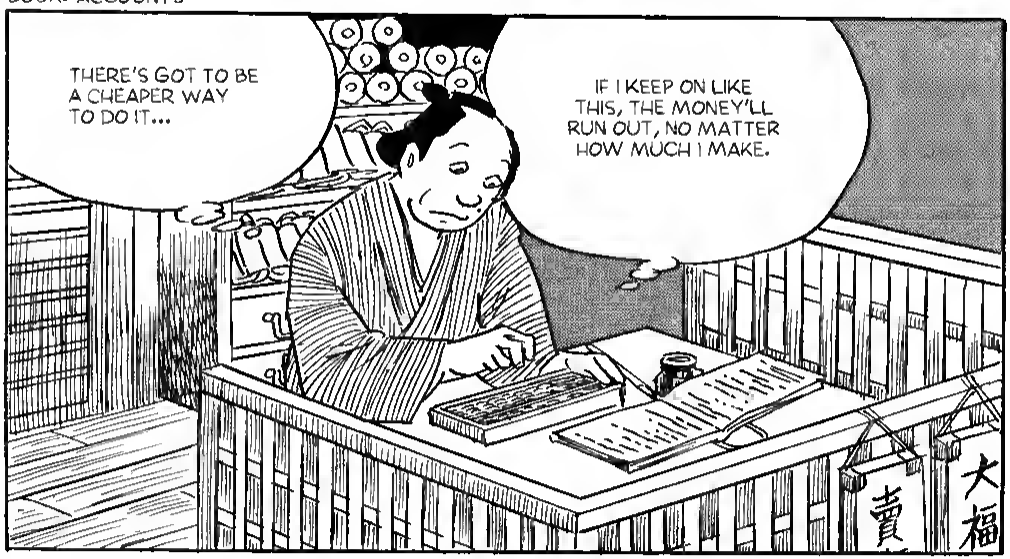

AFTER THAT FIRST EXPERIENCE, TACHIBANA WAS UNABLE TO FORGET THE SWEET PLEASURES OF THE RED-LIGHT DISTRICT.
FROM THEN ON, IT WAS HE WHO INVITED HIS FRIENDS TO GO.
CAN'T BE HELPED. I'M SORRY, DEAR.
YOU'RE QUITE BUSY LATELY.
ANOTHER MEETING TONIGHT, HONEY?







BOOK: ACCOUNTS




MR. TACHIBANA, YOU'VE MADE YUGIRI A VERY HAPPY WOMAN BY DOING THIS.
I'D LIKE TO BUY OUT YUGIRI'S CONTRACT.
WHAT A BEAUTIFUL HOUSE!
HERE'S WHERE YOU'LL LIVE FROM NOW ON, YUGIRI.


THIS WOMAN WILL BE YOUR SERVANT.
I'M SO HAPPY!
AND NOW I CAN SEE YOU WITHOUT WORRYING.
NOW I FINALLY HAVE A MISTRESS OF MY OWN!
HEE HEE HEE!
WELL... ACTUALLY...
WELL? DID YOU FIND OUT ANYTHING?
OH! THE CHIEF CLERK! I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE.
MADAME, I'M BACK.


YOUR HUSBAND IS KEEPING A MISTRESS IN A VERY FINE HOUSE IN NEGISHI.
IT'S FINE...DON'T HOLD BACK. TELL ME EVERYTHING.
Y-YOU'RE CHOKING ME!!
I'LL NEVER FORGIVE HIM! I'LL KILL HIM!!
EVEN THOUGH HE HAS ME RIGHT HERE!
I KNEW IT!
I SAID I'M HOME.
WELCOME BACK!!
I'M HOME!
BUT IN THAT TONE? YOU'RE A WOMAN... CAN'T YOU BE A LITTLE KINDER?
I SAID, "WELCOME BACK," DIDN'T I?


YOU MUST BE QUITE TIRED! HMPH!!
I BET YOU ARE!
OOF...I'M EXHAUSTED.
THAT "HMPH" OF YOURS IS PRETTY UNPLEASANT.
I'M SURE THAT ANY TEA I MAKE WILL BE QUITE TERRIBLE! HMPH!!
BRING ME SOME TEA?
HMPH!!
I'M SURE THAT ANY SUPPER I MAKE WILL BE TERRIBLE!
FINE...FORGET THE TEA. JUST MAKE SOME SUPPER.
LIFE AT HOME WAS NO FUN AT ALL, AND SO, AGAINST HIS BETTER JUDGMENT, TACHIBANA VISITED HIS MISTRESS WITH INCREASING FREQUENCY.
EVERY LITTLE THING IS "HMPH, HMPH, HMPH."



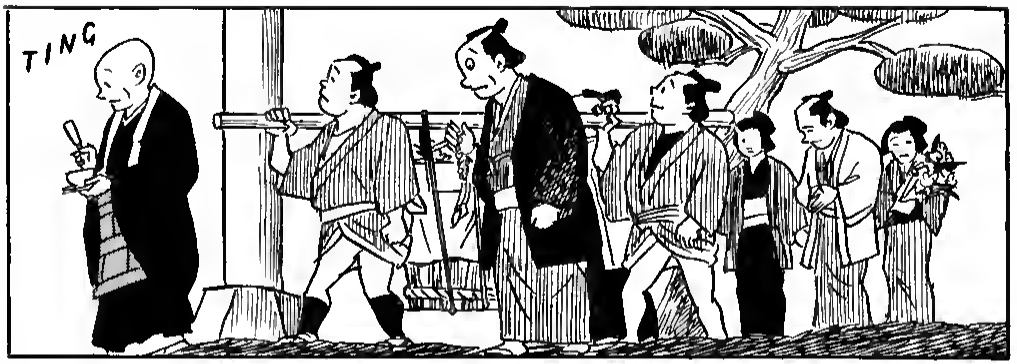
LANTERN: TACHIBANA

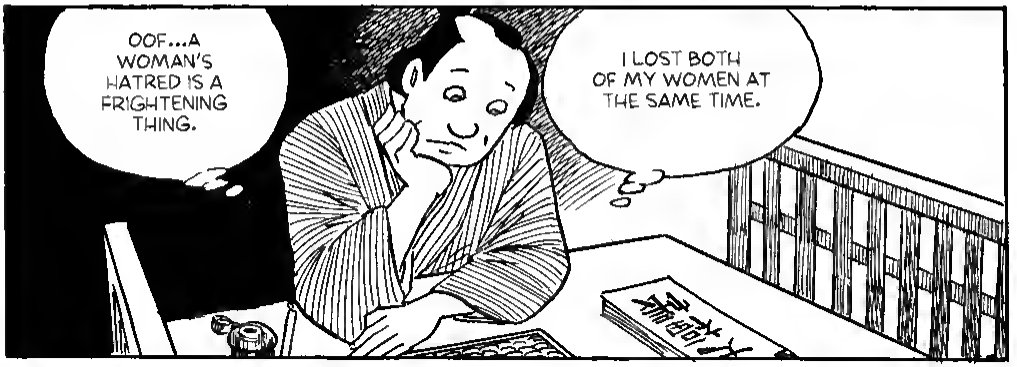

PLEASE BRING DIVINE PUNISH-MENT DOWN ON THE NEGISHI WOMAN.
YES, MA'AM. IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, THE MASTER'S WIFE WAS HAMMERING A STRAW DOLL TO A CEDAR TREE WITH A FIVE-INCH SPIKE. BANG, BANG, BANG...
WHAT?! SHE PUT A CURSE ON ME?!
IF SHE'S GOT A FIVE-INCH SPIKE ON ME...
SHE CAN'T EVEN TAKE CARE OF HER OWN HUSBAND!
DAMN IT! WHO DOES THAT WOMAN THINK SHE IS?!


Y-YES, MISS!
AUNTIE! GO BUY ME A SIX-INCH SPIKE!
CHING CHING
WHAT? A SIX-INCH SPIKE? THAT CHEEKY BITCH...
THEN I'LL GET A SEVEN-INCH SPIKE!

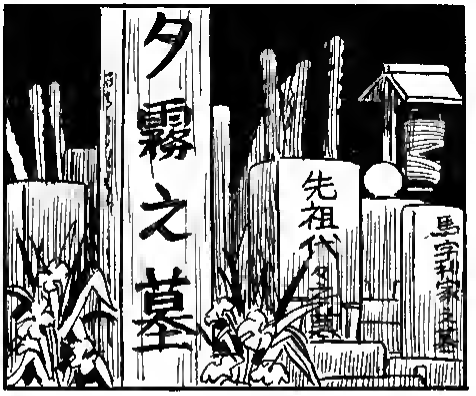

AUNTIE!! AN EIGHT-INCH SPIKE!!
CHING
A FOOT-LONG!!
A NINE-INCH SPIKE!!
CHING
THAT'S TOO LARGE. THEY DON'T SELL THEM THAT BIG.
A FOOT AND A HALF!!
YUGIRI!! STAY WITH ME!
SHE'S DYING, SIR.

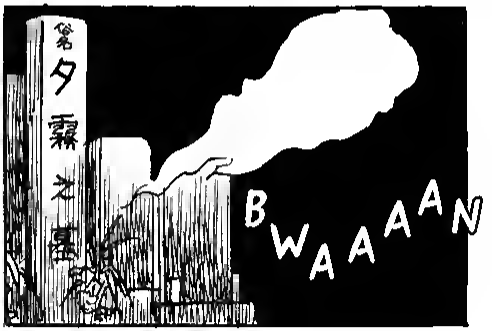

TERRIFYING! YOUR WIFE'S CURSES ACTUALLY WORKED!
CURSE A PERSON AND YOU DIG A HOLE FOR TWO! GOD KEEP HER!
I HAVEN'T BEEN HOME IN THREE DAYS.
THE BURIAL'S FINALLY DONE.
TING
YES, SIR. IT MUST HAVE BEEN THE CURSES OF YOUR MISTRESS.
WHAT?! MY WIFE'S DEAD?!
I'LL HAVE TO HOLD ANO-THER FUNERAL.
AAAAAH!
YOU, TOO?!
HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN?

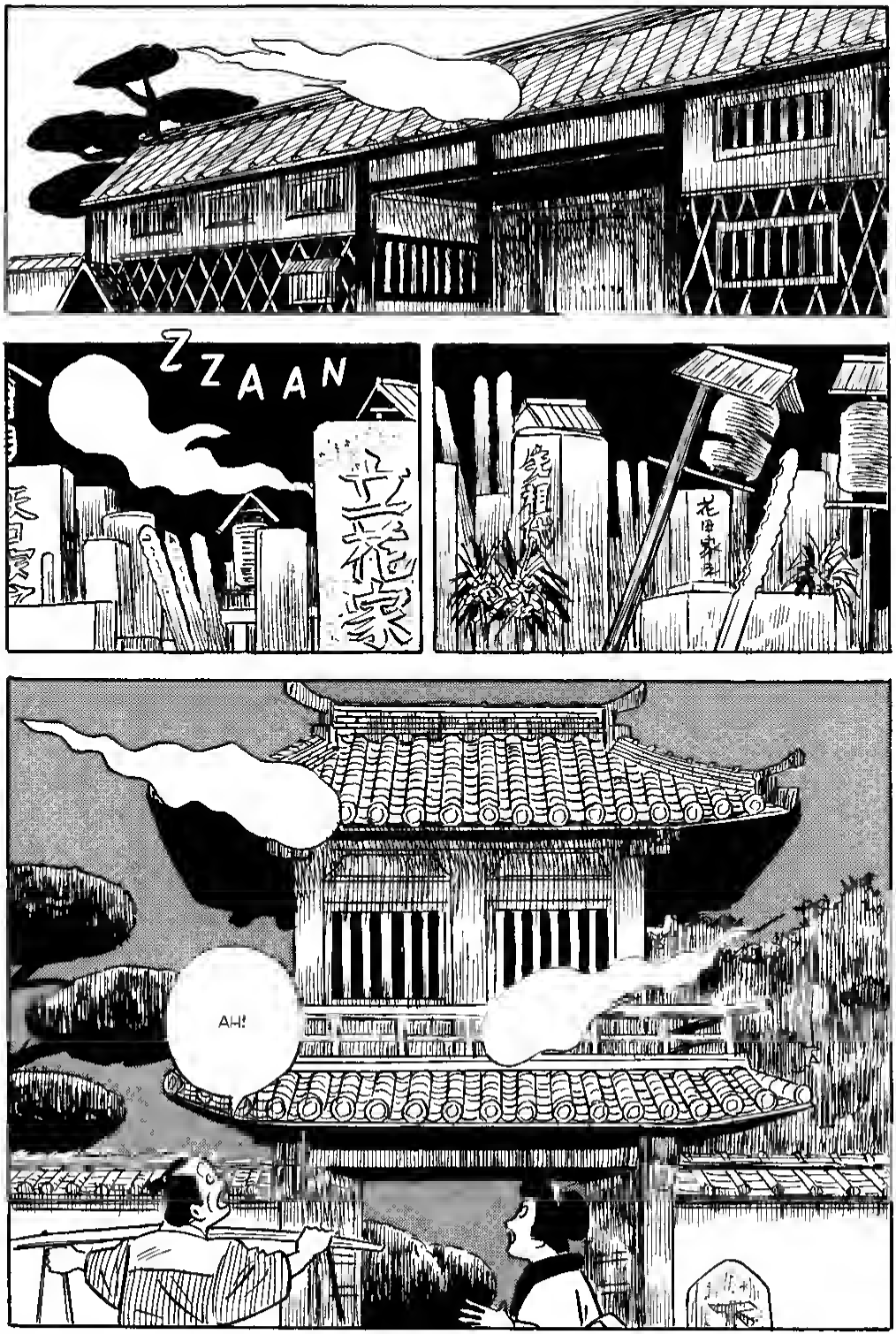

TING

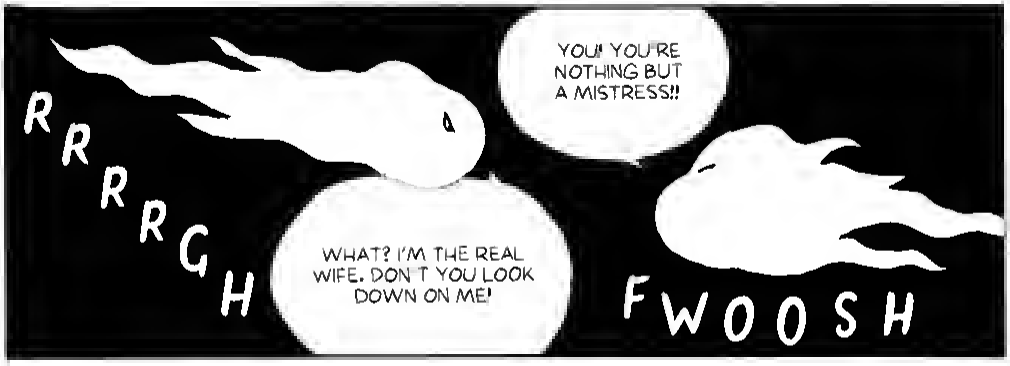

OOF...A WOMAN'S HATRED IS A FRIGHTENING THING.
I LOST BOTH OF MY WOMEN AT THE SAME TIME.


FWOOFWOO
先祖代々之墓

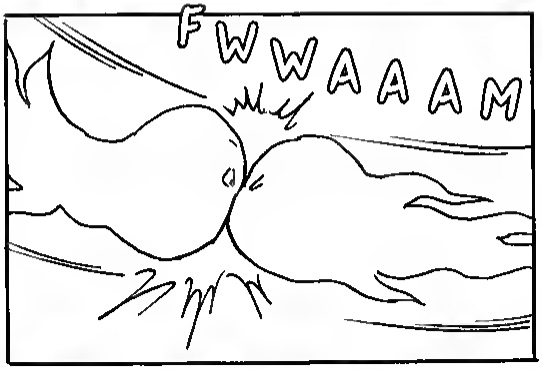

夕霧之墓
先祖代々之墓


夕霧之墓
BWAAAAN


ZZAAN
AH!


RRRRGH
WHAT? I'M THE REAL WIFE. DON'T YOU LOOK DOWN ON ME!
YOU! YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A MISTRESS!!
FWOOSH


BWAAM

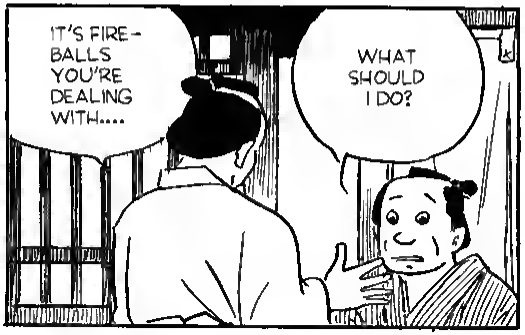

FWWAAAM


KRRR
KRRR

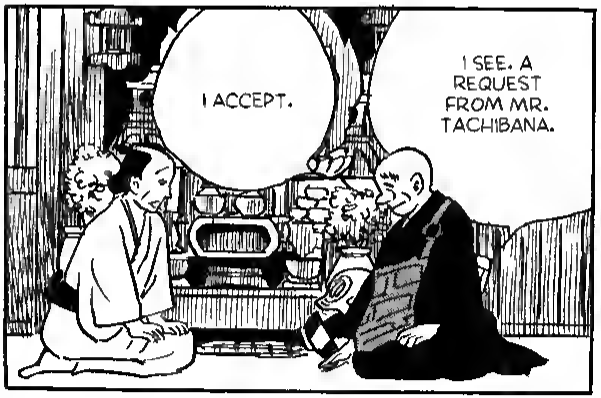

FWOOMP
THOSE FIREBALLS ARE FIGHTING?!

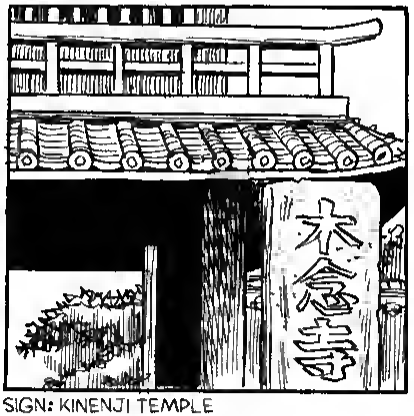




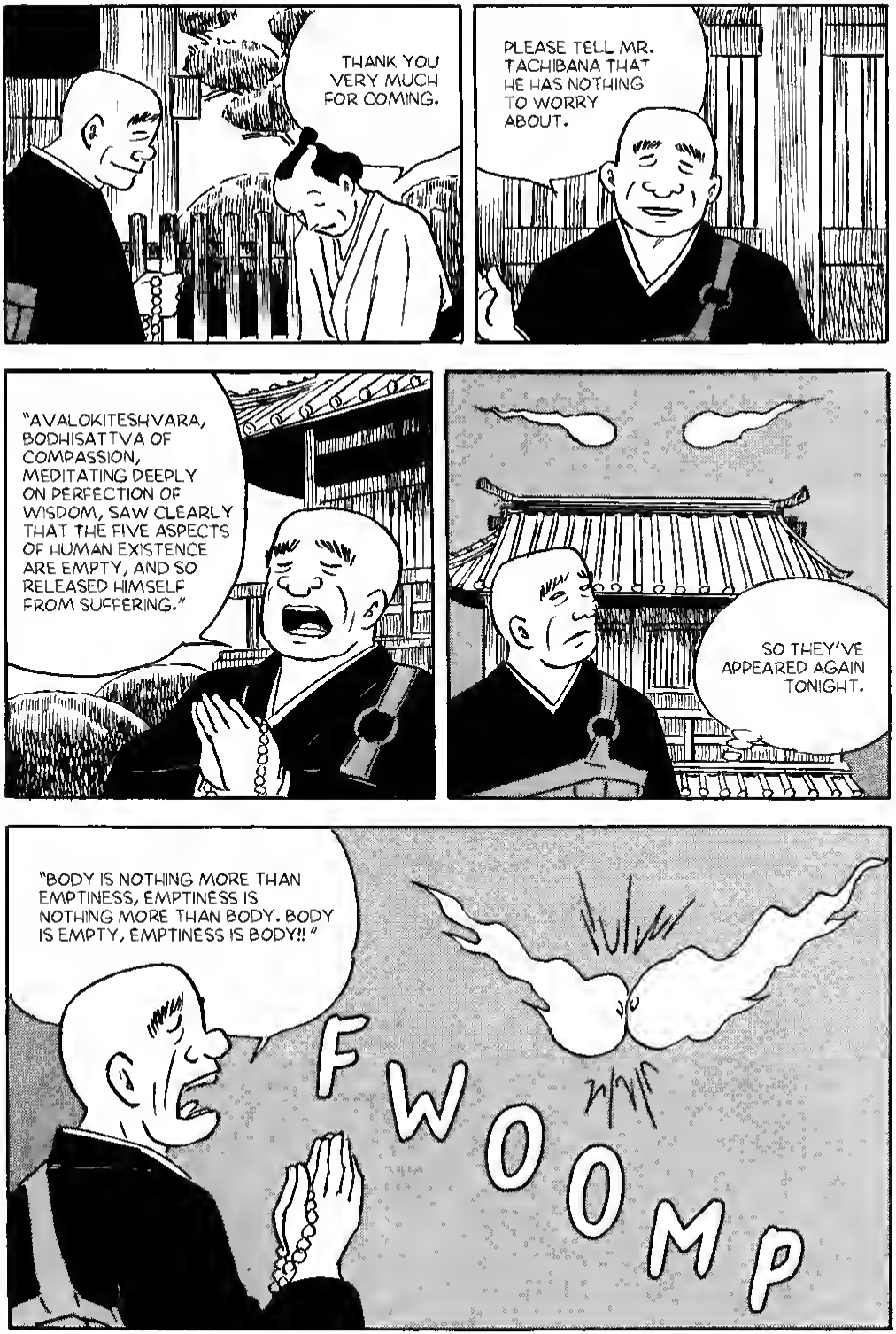








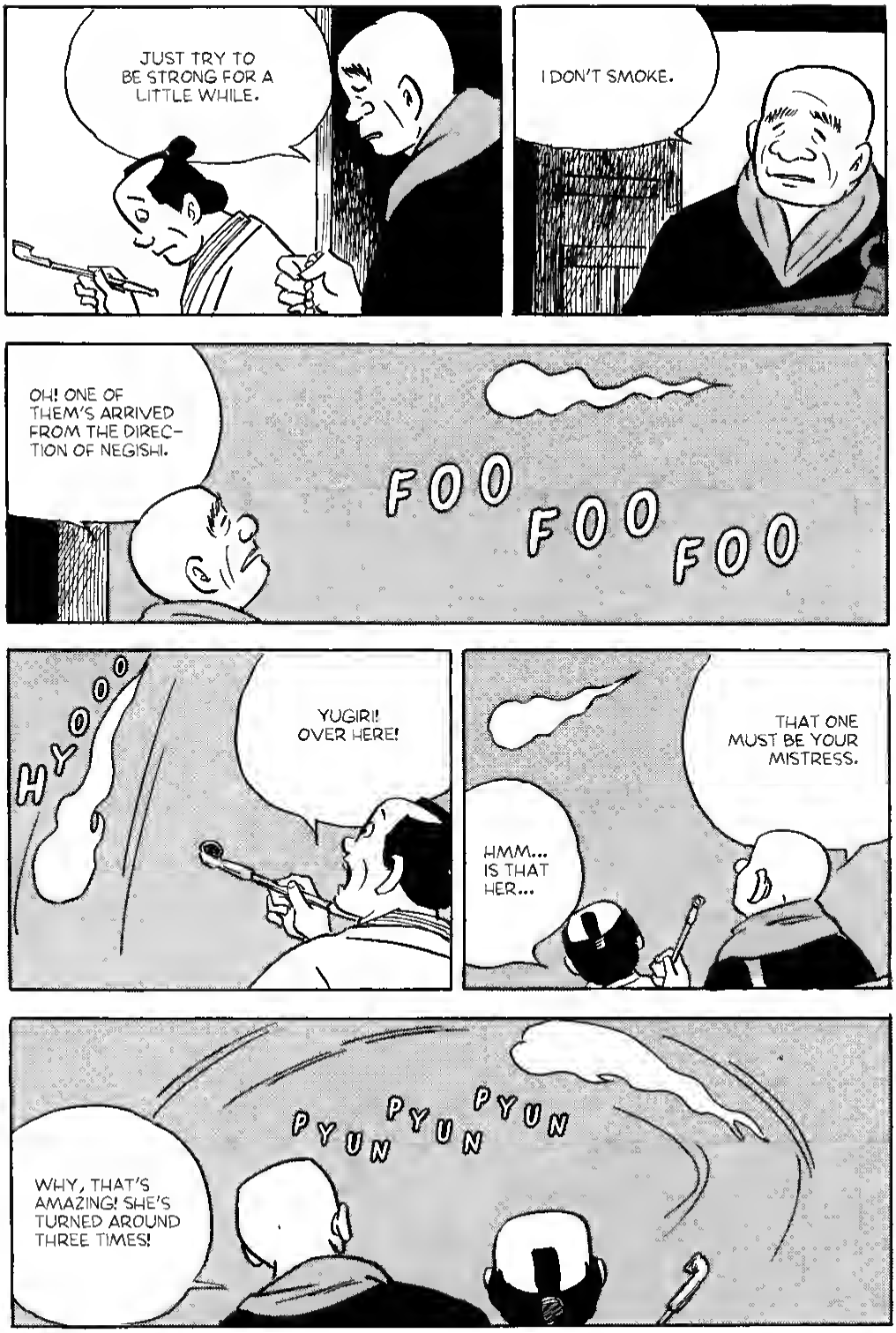
SIGN: KINENJI TEMPLE


THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMING.
PLEASE TELL MR. TACHIBANA THAT HE HAS NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
"AVALOKITESHVARA, BODHISATTVA OF COMPASSION, MEDITATING DEEPLY ON PERFECTION OF WISDOM, SAW CLEARLY THAT THE FIVE ASPECTS OF HUMAN EXISTENCE ARE EMPTY, AND SO RELEASED HIMSELF FROM SUFFERING."
SO THEY'VE APPEARED AGAIN TONIGHT.
"BODY IS NOTHING MORE THAN EMPTINESS, EMPTINESS IS NOTHING MORE THAN BODY. BODY IS EMPTY, EMPTINESS IS BODY!!"
FWOOMP


FWOOMP
"ALL THINGS ARE EMPTY: NOTHING IS BORN, NOTHING DIES, NOTHING IS PURE, NOTHING IS STAINED, NOTHING INCREASES AND NOTHING DECREASES"!
FWOOMP
"NOTHING IS PURE, NOTHING IS STAINED, NOTHING INCREASES AND NOTHING DECREASES"!
KRRRRR
KRRRRR
THEY'VE WON.
KRRRRRRRR


WELL, EVEN WITH THE POWER I HAVE, I COULD DO NOTHING.
HOW DID IT GO, SIR?
OH MY! THE HEAD PRIEST FROM KINEN TEMPLE!
IT'S WHAT'S KEEPING THEIR FIRE BURNING...
IT SEEMS THAT THESE SPIRITS HAVE A DEEP RESENTMENT FOR EACH OTHER.
THAT'S TERRIBLE TO HEAR.
IT'S NOT AS IF THEY ARE STRANGERS TO YOU. IF I COULD CHANT THE SUTRAS ONCE YOU'VE SPOKEN WITH THEM AND CALMED THEM DOWN...
YOU SAID THAT THIS SITUATION ORIGINALLY OCCURRED BECAUSE OF YOU. SO PERHAPS YOU SHOULD STAND BETWEEN THE FIREBALLS AND TRY TO CALM THEM. WHAT DO YOU THINK?


IT IS THE ONLY WAY. ORDINARY METHODS WON'T WORK. NOT WITH FIREBALLS.
I'LL GO TO KINEN TEMPLE TONIGHT.
I SEE. I WONDER IF THEY'D UNDERSTAND IF I SPOKE WITH THEM...
THOSE FIREBALLS SHOULD BE SHOWING THEMSELVES SOON, HMM?
THAT EVENING...
FATHER, WOULD YOU HAPPEN TO HAVE A FLINT?
BUT I FORGOT TO BRING ANYTHING TO MAKE A FLAME.
NO, I JUST THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE NICE TO SMOKE A LITTLE...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? RELAX.


JUST TRY TO BE STRONG FOR A LITTLE WHILE.
I DON'T SMOKE.
OH! ONE OF THEM'S ARRIVED FROM THE DIRECTION OF NEGISHI.
FOO FOO FOO
HYOO
YUGIRI! OVER HERE!
THAT ONE MUST BE YOUR MISTRESS.
HMM... IS THAT HER...
PYUN PYUN PYUN
WHY, THAT'S AMAZING! SHE'S TURNED AROUND THREE TIMES!


YUGIRI, YOU'VE COME. I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.
AH, IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL.
SHHK
BUT YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND IT'S CAUSING TROUBLE FOR ME, YOU SHOWING UP LIKE THIS.
LET'S PUT THAT ASIDE FOR A MOMENT. RIGHT NOW, I'D LIKE TO SMOKE, BUT I HAVEN'T GOT A FLINT.
MM, MM.
YOUR FLAME... YOU'RE REALLY BURNING BRIGHT, HMM?
WOULD YOU...
OH, THAT IS GOOD.
FWOOO!


AS I WAS SAYING... WHEN YOU SHOW UP LIKE THIS, WELL, IT'S A BIT SCARY FOR PEOPLE.
MY WIFE IS JUST AN AMATEUR, SHE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND A THING. SHE'S CAUSED YOU A LOT OF UNNECESSARY GRIEF...
IF YOU COULD SAY TO HER, "MA'AM, EXCUSE ME" OR SOMETHING, EVEN CLUMSILY, IF YOU COULD MAKE UP WITH HER, WELL, IT WOULD REALLY HELP ME.
AND WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT, YOU'RE A GOOD WOMAN, EXPERIENCED IN THE WAYS OF THE WORLD.
BWAN
IN ANY CASE, COME HERE. ONE MORE SMOKE.
TUK
THIS IS REALLY MAKING A LOT OF TROUBLE FOR ME. I'M BEGGING YOU, YUGIRI.


VRRRRRRRRN
HEY! OVER HERE.
VRRR VRRR
THAT FIREBALL MUST BE YOUR WIFE.
WOW! SHE'S REALLY SOMETHING.
SHHHK
VRRRN
VRRRRN
VRRRRN


I WAS WAITING FOR YOU.
MY, MY, YOU REALLY HAVE SOME STRENGTH. I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU.
...AND THE WOMAN FROM NEGISHI, WELL, SHE ASKS FOR YOU TO EXCUSE HER.
I'VE BEEN VERY WORRIED ABOUT ALL OF THIS FIREBALL BUSINESS, YOU SEE?
IF YOU DON'T, WELL, IT'LL MAKE THINGS DIFFICULT FOR ME.
SO I HOPE YOU CAN COME AROUND, TOO.
COME HERE FOR A MINUTE.
WELL, WE DO HAVE A LOT TO TALK ABOUT, BUT...


IF YOU COULD JUST...MY PIPE, YOU SEE...
FWP
HMPH!!
I'M SURE MY FLAME WILL BE TERRIBLE!


MAKING THE ROUNDS


TAK
TAK
TAK
IS THAT HER? OIRAN KISEGAWA?
TAK
TAK
TAK


TAK TAK TAK TAK TAK TAK TAK TAK
TUK
I GUESS NOT...
KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE COME TONIGHT.
I SCREWED UP THIS TIME.
AAAH.
WELL, IF IT'S COME TO THIS, THEN FINE. ALL RIGHT.
OH, HOLD ME CLOSER, DARLING!
OIRAN!
THE OTHER DAY, SHE WAS SO PASSIONATE, THOUGH...




SHE'S JUST AVOIDING ME COMPLETELY.
I CAN'T KEEP COMING HERE WITH THESE PERVERTED IDEAS.


I'LL DEFINITELY BE BACK.
I HATE WHEN YOU HAVE TO LEAVE.

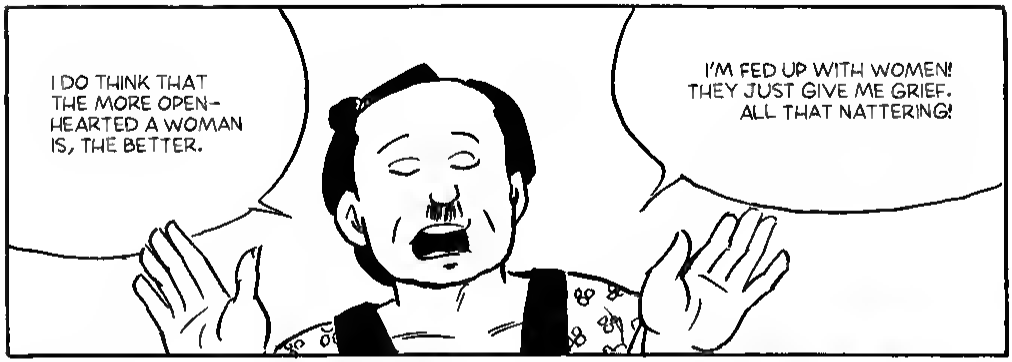

GREETING THE DAWN AFTER A LONG NIGHT OF WAITING ALONE IN A BROTHEL IS NO WAY TO LIVE.
SITTING HERE TWIDDLING MY THUMBS, WAITING FOR AN *OIRAN* IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT...THIS IS A NEW LOW.
THE COUPLE IN THE NEXT ROOM IS PRETTY LOUD.
...
...
...
THEY'VE BEEN CHATTERING NON-STOP SINCE I GOT HERE.


YOU MIND KEEPING IT DOWN A BIT?
HELLOOO! I'M ALONE OVER HERE IN THE NEXT ROOM!
IT TICKLES WHEN YOU TOUCH ME THERE!
WELL, WHAT ABOUT HERE?
AND IT'S TOO LATE NOW FOR ME TO GO HOME IN A HUFF...
WHAT ARE THEY GOING ON ABOUT? BASTARDS ARE SO LOUD.
I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY MAKE YOU PAY IN ADVANCE.
MONEY'S ALREADY SPENT.
AH, I HATE THIS! I REALLY HATE IT.


PATHETIC... I SHOULD BE HOME WITH MY WIFE.
I SUPPOSE, IN THE END, I GOT OFF CHEAP.
THIS IS A TOTAL RIP-OFF.
AND IT'S GOING TO BE DAWN SOON.
TAK
TAK
TAK
TAK
TAK
TAK
TAK!
OH!!
MAYBE SHE WAS JUST GOING AROUND TO THE OTHER CUSTOMERS FIRST SO SHE CAN TAKE HER TIME WITH ME.
OH HO! I GUESS I WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED, AFTER ALL.

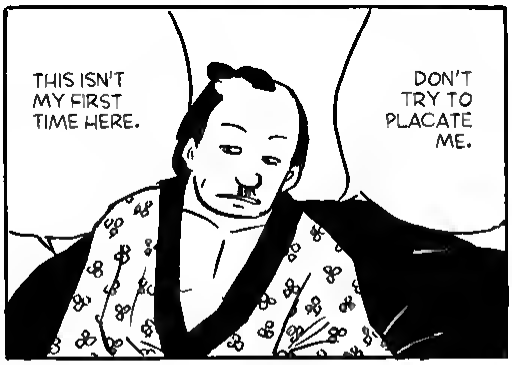

GOOD EVENING, SIR.
HELLO! GOOD EVENING!
MAY I COME IN?
ER, IS IT JUST YOURSELF...?
AND WHO ARE YOU?
YOU MUST BE LONELY, SIR.
IT IS JUST MYSELF, WITH NOT ANOTHER SOUL AROUND.
YOU CAN PLAINLY SEE THAT I'M ALONE.

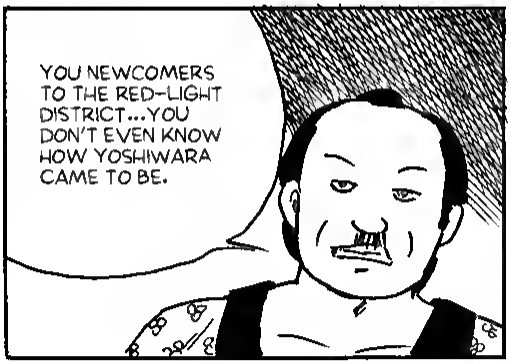

I DO APOLOGIZE, SIR.
WHAT DO YOU THINK? AM I LONELY? SITTING HERE ON THIS FUTON ALL BY MYSELF?
THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE!
DON'T TELL ME TO BE PATIENT.
WHAT?! SHE SHOULD COME NOW!
SHE'LL BE ALONG SHORTLY, SO...
OIRAN KISEGAWA IS VERY BUSY TONIGHT. I HOPE YOU WILL BE KIND ENOUGH TO BE PATIENT A LITTLE LONGER.
YES, SIR. YES, SIR.
I'M NORMALLY NOT THE SORT OF MAN WHO MAKES A FUSS AND YELLS...


I DO THINK THAT THE MORE OPEN-HEARTED A WOMAN IS, THE BETTER.
I'M FED UP WITH WOMEN! THEY JUST GIVE ME GRIEF. ALL THAT NATTERING!


I DO APOLOGIZE FOR ANGERING YOU, SIR. I'M SURE SHE'LL BE RIGHT ALONG NOW.
BUT KISEGAWA IS A BIT TOO OPEN-HEARTED, ISN'T SHE?!


I'M GONNA TEACH YOU SOMETHING, SO DIG THE ROCKS OUT OF YOUR EARS AND LISTEN CAREFULLY.
YES, SIR.


THIS ISN'T MY FIRST TIME HERE.
DON'T TRY TO PLACATE ME.


YOU NEWCOMERS TO THE RED-LIGHT DISTRICT...YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW YOSHIWARA CAME TO BE.

"SUPERSTITIOUS FELLOW THAT HE WAS, SHOJI DECIDED THAT "ASHI," THE CHARACTER FOR GRASS, WOULDN'T DO AS A NAME, SO HE REPLACED IT WITH "YOSHI"– A CHARACTER FOR GOOD FORTUNE, AS YOU MIGHT KNOW– WHICH IS HOW THE PLACE GOT THE NAME YOSHIWARA."

"SHOJI BUILT HIS BROTHEL IN FUKIYACHO, BUT AT THAT TIME, IT WAS JUST A FLAT FIELD COVERED IN THICK GRASS."



"NOW WITH THE ORIGINAL YOSHIWARA, YOU SEE, A FELLOW BY THE NAME OF JINBEI SHOJI PUT IN A REQUEST IN 1619, AND ENDED UP RUNNING THE FIRST BROTHEL TO BE LICENSED BY THE TOKUGAWA SHOGUNATE."

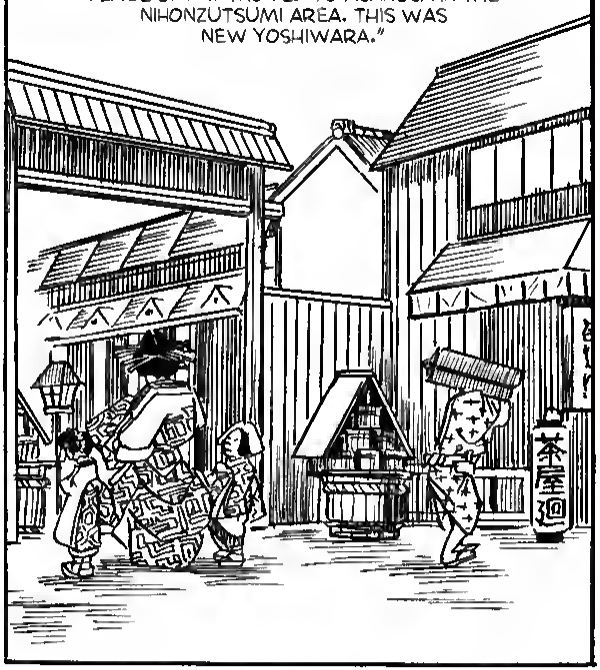


KEICHO/GENNA–ERA PROSTITUTE

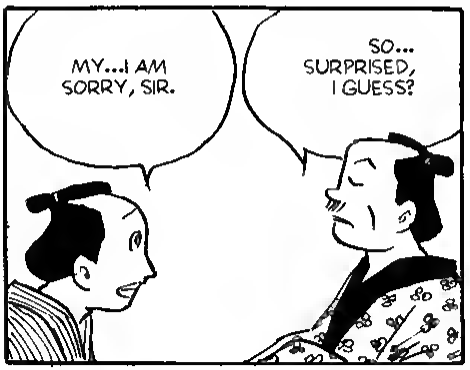
"WELL...THREE YEARS AFTER I WAS BORN, I WAS SENT TO LIVE IN THIS NEW YOSHIWARA, AND NOW I KNOW EVERY DETAIL: WHO IS WHAT GENERATION, WHO COMES FROM WHERE, WHO DIED, WHEN THEY DIED, AND WHERE THEY'RE BURIED..."

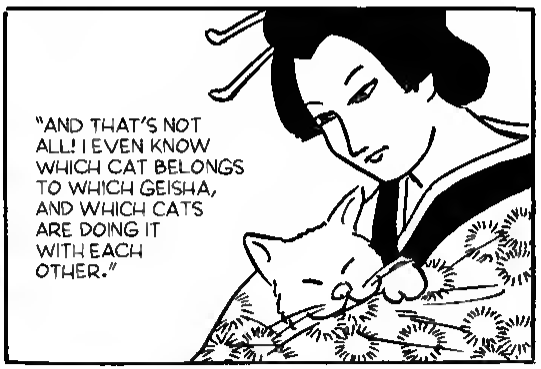


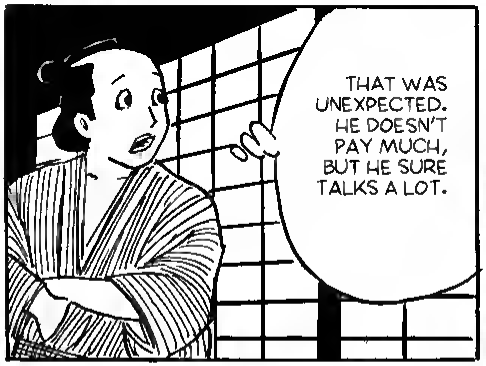
"THEN, IN ITS THIRTY–EIGHTH YEAR, THE SECOND YEAR OF THE MEIREKI PERIOD (1656), THE WHOLE PLACE UP AND MOVED TO ASAKUSA IN THE NIHONZUTSUMI AREA. THIS WAS NEW YOSHIWARA."

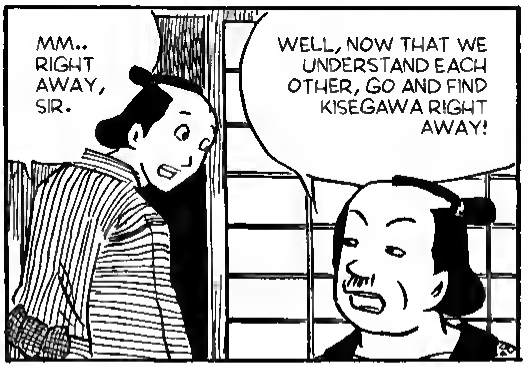



"HOW MUCH DEBT A PROSTITUTE IS CARRYING, WHO IS WHOSE LOVER... ALL THAT'S RIGHT HERE IN MY HEAD."

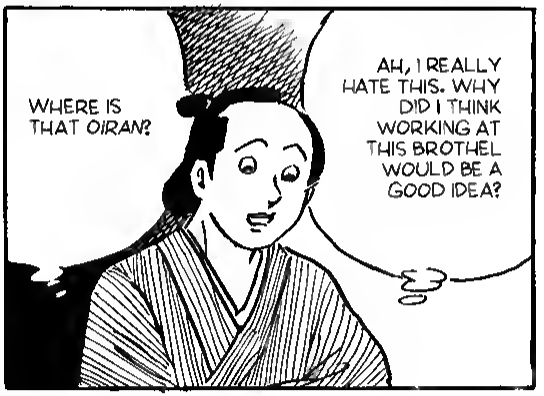

MY...I AM SORRY, SIR.
SO... SURPRISED, I GUESS?


"AND THAT'S NOT ALL! I EVEN KNOW WHICH CAT BELONGS TO WHICH GEISHA, AND WHICH CATS ARE DOING IT WITH EACH OTHER."


THAT WAS UNEXPECTED. HE DOESN'T PAY MUCH, BUT HE SURE TALKS A LOT.


MM.. RIGHT AWAY, SIR.
WELL, NOW THAT WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER, GO AND FIND KISEGAWA RIGHT AWAY!

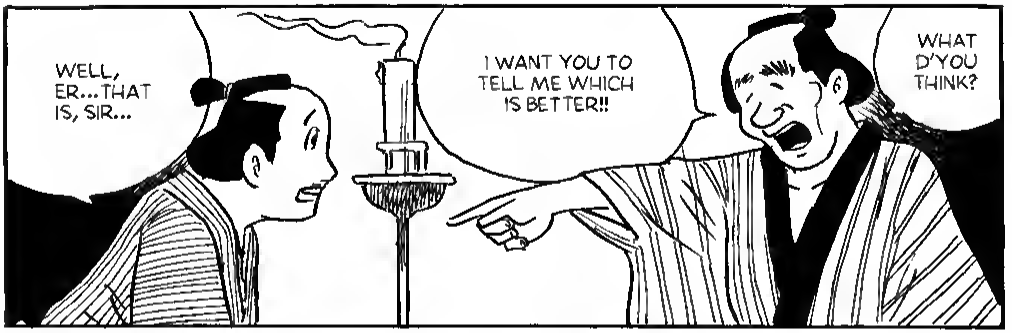

MISS KISE-GAWA!
HELLO! MISS KISE-GAWA!


WHERE IS THAT *OIRAN*?
AH, I REALLY HATE THIS. WHY DID I THINK WORKING AT THIS BROTHEL WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA?

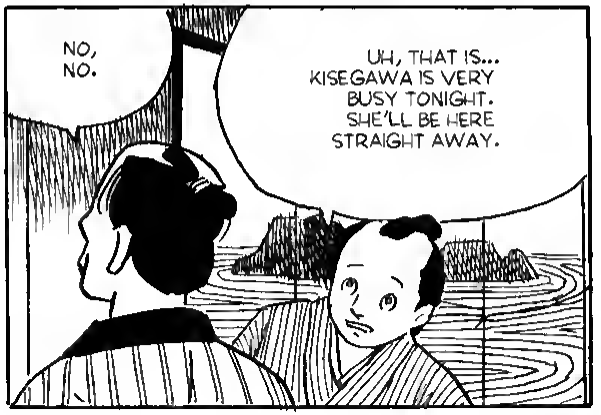

GOOD EVENING, SIR...
YOU! MY GOOD MAN IN THE HALL. CAN I SPEAK TO YOU FOR A MOMENT?
DON'T BE SHY.
COME ON IN AND HAVE A SEAT.
AMAZING, HUH? THERE'S NO NEED FOR US TO BE SO HARD ON THESE LADIES.
I HEARD ALL THAT. THAT UNPLEASANT LITTLE MAN WITH ALL HIS COMPLAINING.

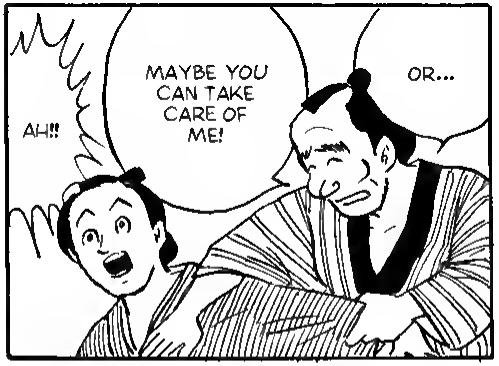

IF ONLY ALL OUR CLIENTS WERE AS UNDERSTANDING AS YOURSELF, I WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY AS MUCH AS I DO.
WHY, THANK YOU.
"LOOK UPON THE SNOW ON THE PEAK SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO FEEL THE CHILL."
THERE'S NO CRIME IN A WOMAN BEING SO BEAUTIFUL THAT SHE COULD TAKE DOWN A KING. IT'S FOOLS LIKE ME WHO ARE THE CRIMINALS.
YES, YES.
IN ANY CASE, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, A MAN LIKE THAT WILL ALWAYS DEMAND HIS MONEY BACK. IT'S BAFFLING, TO BE HONEST.
WELL, A SYMPATHETIC MAN SUCH AS YOURSELF DOESN'T COME ALONG TOO OFTEN.
THERE'S NO EXCUSE FOR THAT KIND OF RUDENESS. HE DOESN'T BELONG IN SUCH A FINE ESTABLISHMENT.
I APOLOGIZE, SIR.
NOT AT ALL! IF I WERE WAITING ALL NIGHT AND THE OIRAN IGNORED ME LIKE THAT, I'D BE YELLING MYSELF, NO DOUBT.


NOT AT ALL, SIR. I AM STILL YOUNG, STILL LEARNING, YOU SEE.
YOU'RE JUST A MANSERVANT TO THE LADIES OF THE NIGHT NOW, AREN'T YOU?
SON, YOU'VE BEEN HERE A LONG TIME. YOU'RE NOT WET BEHIND THE EARS ANYMORE. YOU REALLY SHOULD KNOW BETTER. YOU CAN'T LET YOURSELF BE SENT ON THESE WILD GOOSE CHASES AT THE WHIM OF A LADY.
HEH HEH HEH... ACTUALLY, ONCE I'M DONE HERE...
YES, WELL, THERE IS A PLACE WE DO LIKE TO GO.
I SUPPOSE THAT'S TRUE. AND A YOUNG FELLOW LIKE YOU, YOU WANT TO GO OUT WITH YOUR FRIENDS SOMETIMES, I SUPPOSE. MAYBE SPEND THE NIGHT WITH A LADY AND THE LIKE?
SO THEN, LET ME ASK YOU: THAT WOMAN, THAT SIREN WHO SINGS HER SONG FOR YOU...WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE HER GLUED TO YOUR SIDE OR HAVE HER SOMEWHERE ELSE? HM?
WELL, AREN'T YOU A LUCKY SON OF A GUN? GETTING TO SPEND TIME WITH YOUR LADY FRIEND AFTER WORK. I'M A BIT JEALOUS, TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH.

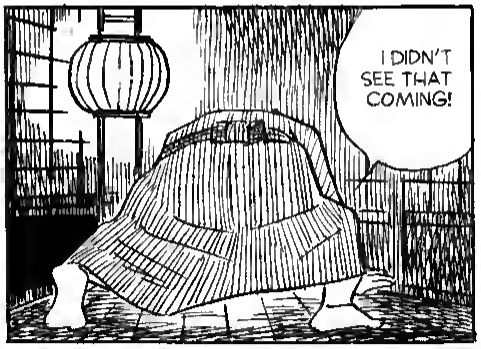

WELL, ER... THAT IS, SIR...
I WANT YOU TO TELL ME WHICH IS BETTER!!
WHAT D'YOU THINK?

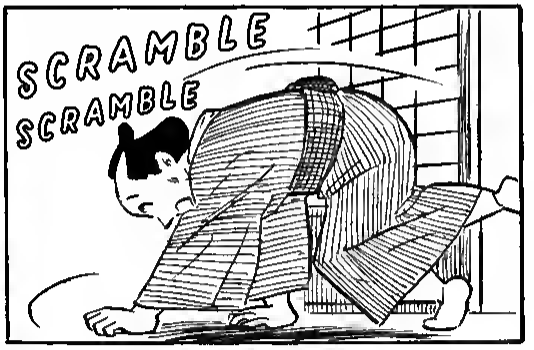

THE PRINCESS CAN'T SHOW UP WHEN THE ROOSTER'S JUST ABOUT TO CROW. THAT'S JUST INSULTING.

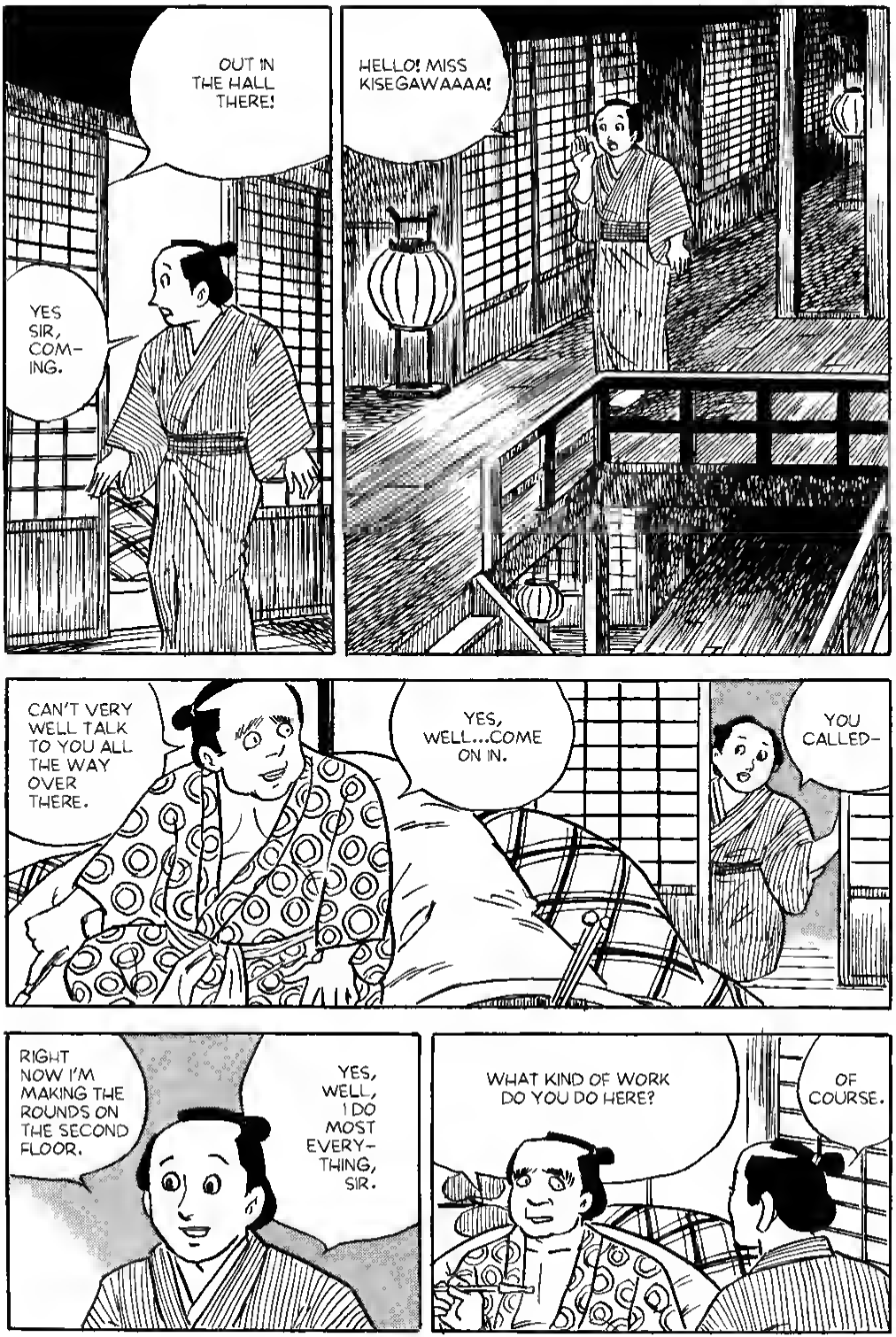

NO, NO.
UH, THAT IS... KISEGAWA IS VERY BUSY TONIGHT. SHE'LL BE HERE STRAIGHT AWAY.


AH!!
MAYBE YOU CAN TAKE CARE OF ME!
OR...


SHE'LL BE HERE RIGHT AWAY!
I'LL BE ASKING FOR MY MONEY BACK NOW.


I DIDN'T SEE THAT COMING!


SCRAMBLE
SCRAMBLE


OUT IN THE HALL THERE!
YES SIR, COM-ING.
HELLO! MISS KISEGAWAAAA!
CAN'T VERY WELL TALK TO YOU ALL THE WAY OVER THERE.
YES, WELL...COME ON IN.
YOU CALLED-
RIGHT NOW I'M MAKING THE ROUNDS ON THE SECOND FLOOR.
YES, WELL, I DO MOST EVERY-THING, SIR.
WHAT KIND OF WORK DO YOU DO HERE?
OF COURSE.


SORRY?
TOUGH GUY, HUH?
TURNING IT 'ROUND ALL BY YOURSELF, HUH, BROTHER?
OH! SECOND FLOOR, YOU SAY...
WELL.
LISTEN TO ME. I'M SITTING HERE DOING NOTHING. WHAT KIND OF AN OPERATION IS THIS?
NOT AT ALL, SIR...
ARE YOU SNUBBING ME JUST BECAUSE I'M FROM KYOTO?
I CAME TO THIS BROTHEL AND I PAID A GOOD CHUNK OF CHANGE SO I COULD HAVE ALL THE FUN I WANTED TONIGHT. SO JUST WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?


LET'S ASSUME ONE OF THEM IS FOR ME TO USE. THEN JUST WHO'S THE OTHER ONE FOR?
THERE ARE TWO PILLOWS HERE.
I MEAN, HERE IT IS, ALMOST MORNING AND SHE HASN'T EVEN SHOWN HER FACE! TERRIBLE, DON'T YOU THINK?!
WELL?!
AND "THE YOUNG LADY" WOULD BE WHERE?
THAT IS, WELL... IT WOULD BE FOR THE YOUNG LADY.
I'M VERY SORRY, SIR.
PLEASE BE PATIENT... SHE'LL BE ALONG SHORTLY.
YOU GOT ANY UNDERSTANDING OF HOW IT WORKS WHEN A MAN BUYS A WOMAN, BROTHER? ANSWER ME.
THIS YOUNG LADY...THAT YOUNG LADY... NOT A SINGLE GIRL'S COME BY. NOT ONCE.


ARE YOU GONNA BRING A GIRL RIGHT NOW, OR ARE YOU GONNA GIVE ME BACK WHAT I PAID? I WANT AN ANSWER THIS SECOND!!
YOU HOLD ON A MINUTE!
Y-YES SIR.
I'LL GO AND CALL HER RIGHT AWAY, SIR. YES, SIR!
I'LL TOSS A BOMB RIGHT THROUGH THE WINDOW OF THIS PLACE!
YOU ANSWER WRONG AND YOU'LL HAVE A FIGHT ON YER HANDS!
HELLO! MISS KISEGAWA!
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME.
WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT? TALKING ABOUT THROWING A BOMB IN HERE??


WHAT'S ALL THE SLAMMING AND THUMPING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?
WHAT IS GOING ON IN THIS ROOM?
FWOOMP
MISS KI-
THUD
THUMP
WHAT'S ALL THIS? WHAT ARE YOU DOING, PULLING UP THE TATAMI MATS LIKE THIS?
I'M OPENING THE DOOR, SIR.
EXCUSE ME.
WHAT DID YOU LOSE, SIR?
I WAS JUST LOOKING FOR SOMETHING I LOST. GIVE ME A HAND.
OH, THE YOUNG PAGE, IS IT?


THE WOMAN I PAID FOR. SHE SEEMS TO HAVE DISAPPEARED, SO I'M LOOKING FOR HER.
YOU MUSTN'T JOKE AROUND LIKE THAT, SIR. I'LL BE BACK SOON.
HELLO! MISS KISEGAWA!
PFFT! SARCASTIC BASTARD.
THAT IT MAY V'RY WELL BE.
OH, MR. GOHACHI. FROM MIKAWASHIMA, RIGHT?
CAN I GET YOU TO C'MERE FER A MINUTE?
OH, YOUNG MAN!


IF THEY'RE GONNA BLOW OFF A CUSTOMER, BEST BLOW OFF THE COUNTRY BUMPKINS. THOSE FARM BOYS, ALL RIGHT?
I WANT YOU TO GO AN' TELL THOSE LASSES...
SO DON'T BE TREATIN' ME WITH NO DIS-RESPECT.
ALL DUE RESPECT, YOUNG MAN, I BEEN COMIN' 'ROUND HERE MORNING AND NIGHT FER A WHILE NOW. COULD SAY THIS IS MY TERRITORY, ALL RIGHT?
'COURSE I AM! I'M THE SORT OF MAN WHAT HAS GOLD BRAID WRAPPED ROUND HIS NIGHTSOIL BUCKETS, I AM! HOW'S THAT FOR IDO, BROTHER?
MR. GOHACHI, YOU'RE AN EDO MAN.
ME, AS YOU CAN SEE, I'M AN IDO MAN, I AM.
NO WORKIN' GIRL ANYWHERE'S GONNA BLOW OFF A FELLOW LIKE ME, ALL RIGHT?
YOU'RE QUITE RIGHT, SIR! QUITE RIGHT!
ME, I GOT A GIRL WHO GETS DOWNRIGHT SICK WHEN SHE DON'T SEE MY FACE FOR THREE DAYS.


QUITE THE IDO MAN, HMM...
I'LL GO AND FETCH THE OIRAN RIGHT NOW, SIR...
YE-E-E-S?
HELLO! MISS KISEGAWA!
MISS KISEGAWA, YOU'RE REALLY CAUSING TROUBLE. GO AND MAKE THE ROUNDS, FOR A MINUTE AT LEAST. THE OTHER CLIENTS ARE GETTING REALLY MAD, AND I CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO CALM THEM.
I'M OPENING THE DOOR.
OH! HERE YOU ARE!


CERTAINLY, SIR. YOU'RE MISS KISEGAWA'S SPECIAL CLIENT, AREN'T YOU?
OH HO, SEIKICHI, IS IT? JUST IN TIME. I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU. COME ON IN.
I SEE THIS OIRAN'S CAUSING YOU PROBLEMS, HAVING SET HER MIND ON STAYING HERE WITH ME AND NOT MAKING THE ROUNDS. HMM?
IT'S COMPLETELY UNDERSTANDABLE THAT YOU'D WANT TO STAY HERE WITH THE MAN YOU LOVE, BUT UNTIL I BUY YOUR CONTRACT, YOU'VE GOT TO BE STRONG. HMM?
I TOLD YOU BEFORE. YOU HAVE TO BE STRONG AND PUT UP WITH THE UNPLEASANT CLIENTS, TOO. THAT'S YOUR JOB HERE AS A LADY OF THE NIGHT.


THEY'RE BECOMING INCREASINGLY RUDE, SAYING THINGS LIKE "GIVE ME MY MONEY BACK!" SOME ARE EVEN MAKING THREATS!
IF SHE DOESN'T COME, THE OTHER CLIENTS'LL BE ANGRY, YES?
THEY ALREADY ARE.
THAT'S WHY THE LADIES WALK RIGHT BY THESE MEN.
YOU'RE EXACTLY RIGHT, SIR.
THAT SO? "GIVE ME MY MONEY BACK." INCREDIBLE.
FOUR OF THEM, SIR.
SO HOW MANY ARE THERE, THEN?
BE AN ANGEL AND GIVE THEM THEIR MONEY BACK. FOR ME.
DARLING.
FOUR OF THEM?


IF THAT'S WHAT MY *OIRAN* WANTS, THEN THAT'S WHAT I HAVE TO DO.
FINE, FINE. DON'T HAVE A CHOICE, DO I?
YES, SIR! THANK YOU SO MUCH!
SEIKICHI, IS THIS ENOUGH FOR THE FOUR OF THEM?
WHAT IS IT, HONEY?
SAY, DAR-LING.
THANK YOU SO MUCH, SIR.
KEEP THE CHANGE.


ONE MORE AFTER THOSE FOUR...WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO WITH THIS?
I'M SORRY, BUT COULD YOU PAY FOR JUST ONE MORE?
SO YOU'RE GIVING BACK WHAT I GAVE YOU...WHY EXACTLY WOULD YOU DO THAT?
I CAN GIVE IT BACK TO YOU, DARLING.
NOW THAT YOU'VE GIVEN THIS TO ME...
TAKE THE MONEY AND LEAVE WITH THE REST OF THEM.


THE ROOSTER CROWS
茶屋迴
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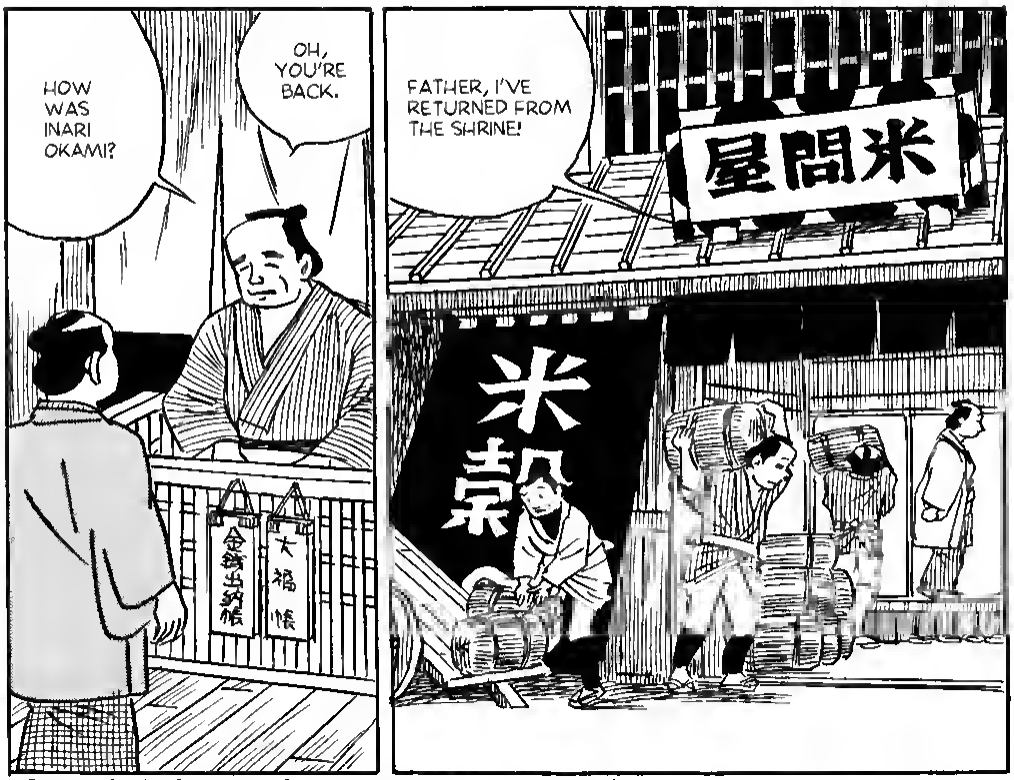

稲荷大明神
奉
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大明神


IF IT ISN'T THE YOUNG MASTER!
そば処


流風
粉ん志
細工


HA HA HA! WELL, I GUESS WE ARE JUST SITTING AROUND.
WILL YOU BOTH BE GOING TO THE SHRINE LATER?
AH, NO. I'VE JUST COME FROM THE SHRINE ACTUALLY.
OFF TO PRAY TO INARI OKAMI...?
JOIN US. SIT. HAVE SOME SOBA WITH US.
ACTUALLY, YOU'VE GOT GOOD TIMING! I HAD SOMETHING I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT.
I'LL HAVE THE *MUGITORO*...
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, I AM A BIT HUNGRY.
I SUPPOSE IT COULDN'T HURT TO JOIN YOU.

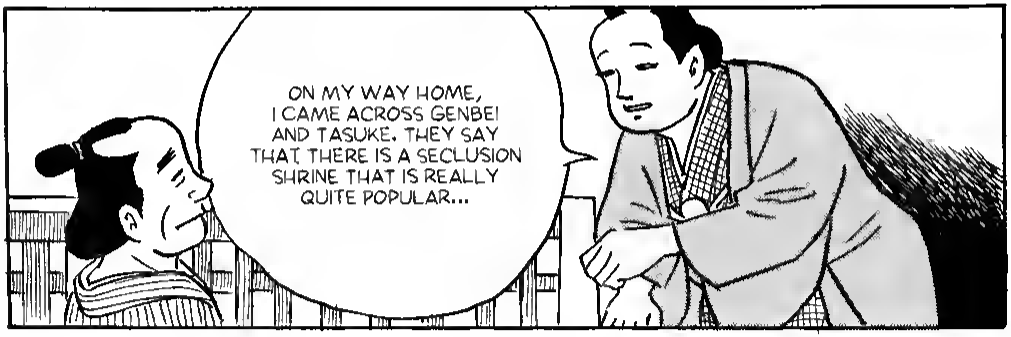

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE INARI SHRINE WHERE YOU CAN GO INTO SECLUSION? IT'S QUITE POPULAR.
IT WAS SO CROWDED TODAY. I SUPPOSE BECAUSE OF THE *HATSU-UMA* HOLIDAY.
YOU DO THAT, MASTER. YOU DO THAT.
WELL, WHEN I GET HOME, I'LL DISCUSS IT WITH FATHER.
BEHIND THE SENSO-JI TEMPLE. I CAN SHOW YOU, IF YOU'D LIKE.
AND WHERE IS THIS SECLUSION SHRINE?
I'LL SEE YOU LATER.



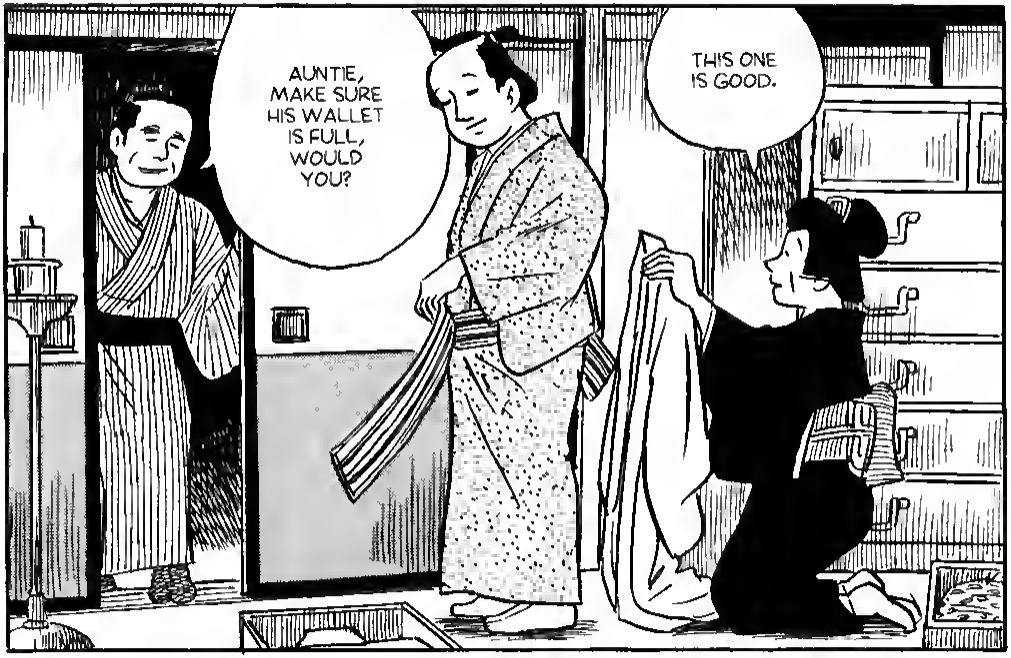
SIGNS: ACCOUNTS, EXPENSES

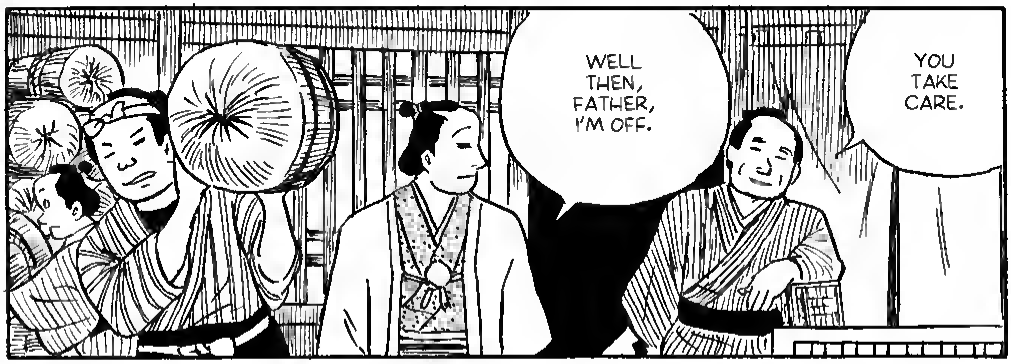
SIGN: RICE WHOLESALER






GENBEI AND TASUKE DID?
THEY INVITED ME TO GO WITH THEM...
YOU SHOULD GO WITH THEM.
...OH! THAT INARI SHRINE! I USED TO WORSHIP THERE ALMOST EVERY DAY WHEN I WAS YOUNGER.
IT SEEMS THERE'S A SHRINE UP BEHIND THE SENSO-JI TEMPLE...
ALL RIGHT.
BUT IF YOU'RE NOT DRESSED NICELY, YOU WON'T GET MUCH OUT OF IT. GO AND CHANGE YOUR KIMONO BEFORE YOU HEAD OUT.
AND YOU'LL NEED A BIT OF SPENDING MONEY OR THE WHOLE TRIP WILL BE WASTED.


AUNTIE, MAKE SURE HIS WALLET IS FULL, WOULD YOU?
THIS ONE IS GOOD.


WELL THEN, FATHER, I'M OFF.
YOU TAKE CARE.

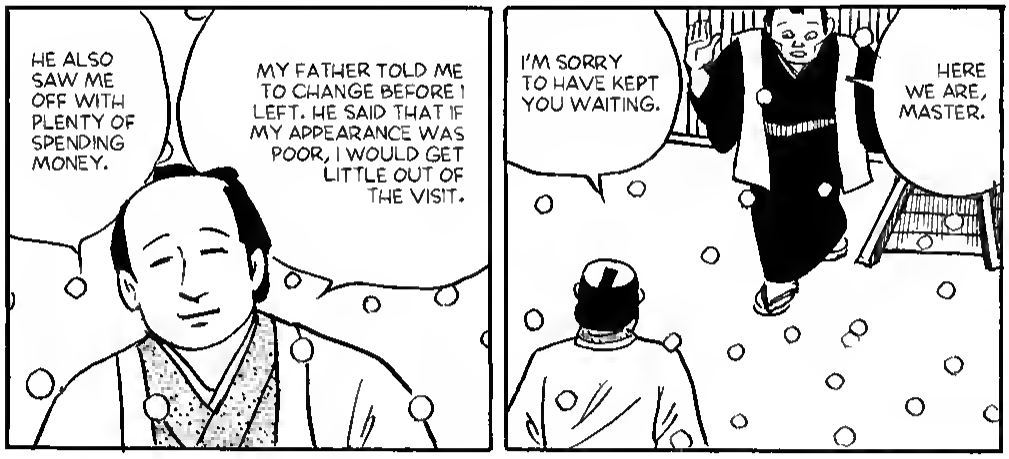

I'M GOING INTO SECLUSION AT THE INARI SHRINE!
OH, SIR! WHERE ARE YOU HEADED?

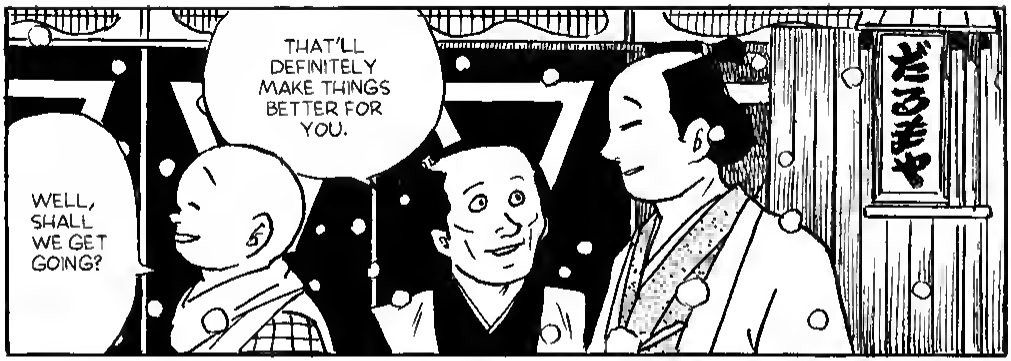


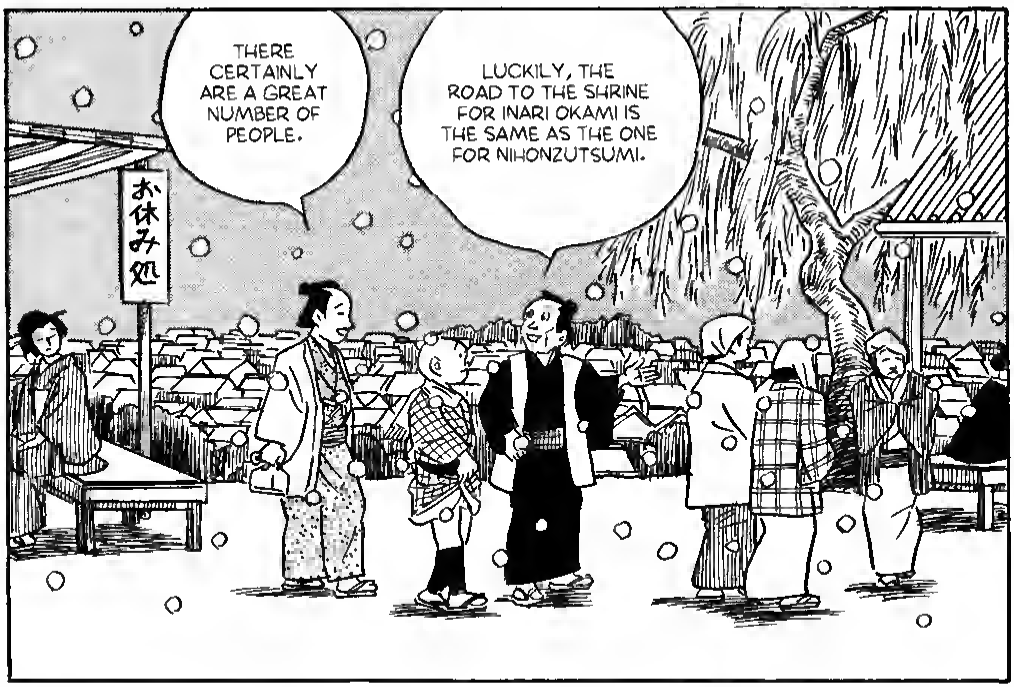


SIGNS: SUEHIRO SHOP

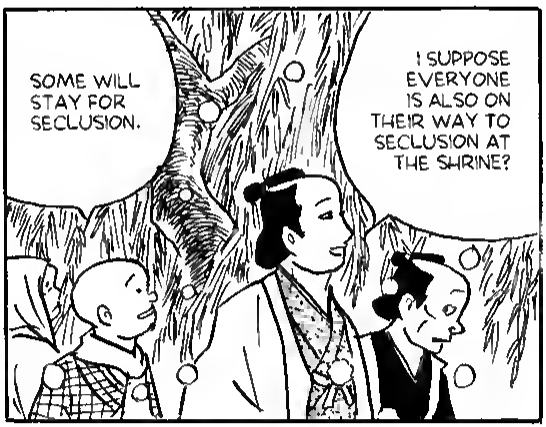





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THAT'LL DEFINITELY MAKE THINGS BETTER FOR YOU.
WELL, SHALL WE GET GOING?

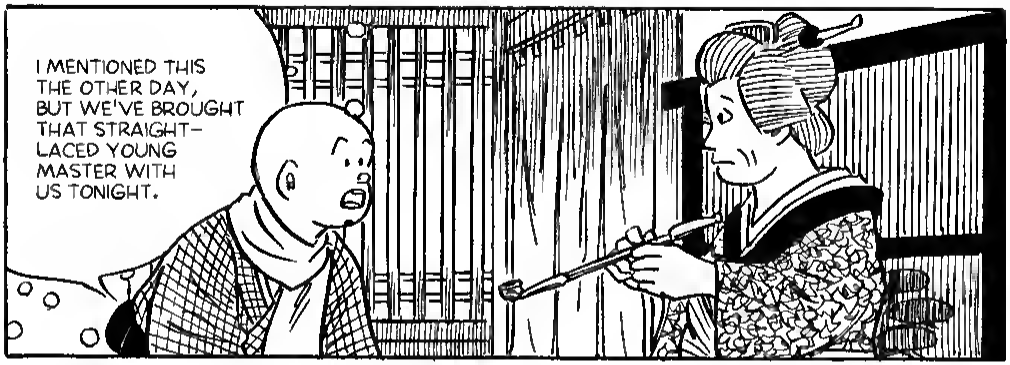

お休み処
THERE CERTAINLY ARE A GREAT NUMBER OF PEOPLE.
LUCKILY, THE ROAD TO THE SHRINE FOR INARI OKAMI IS THE SAME AS THE ONE FOR NIHONZUTSUMI.

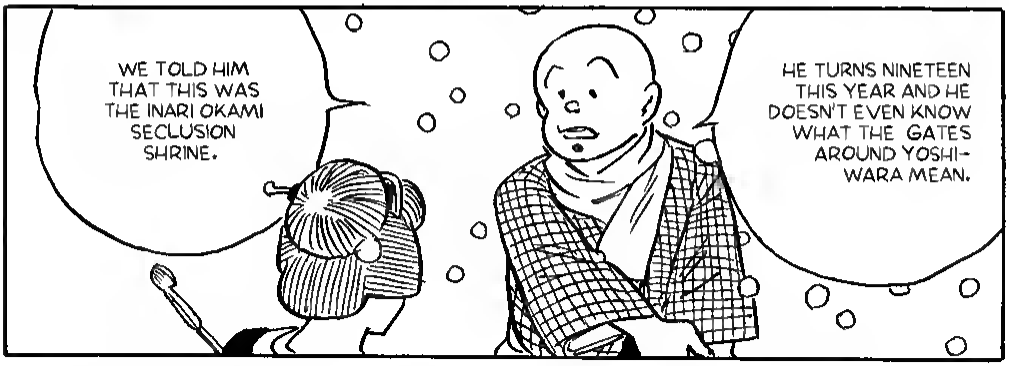

SOME WILL JUST GO TO PRAY AND THEN RETURN HOME.

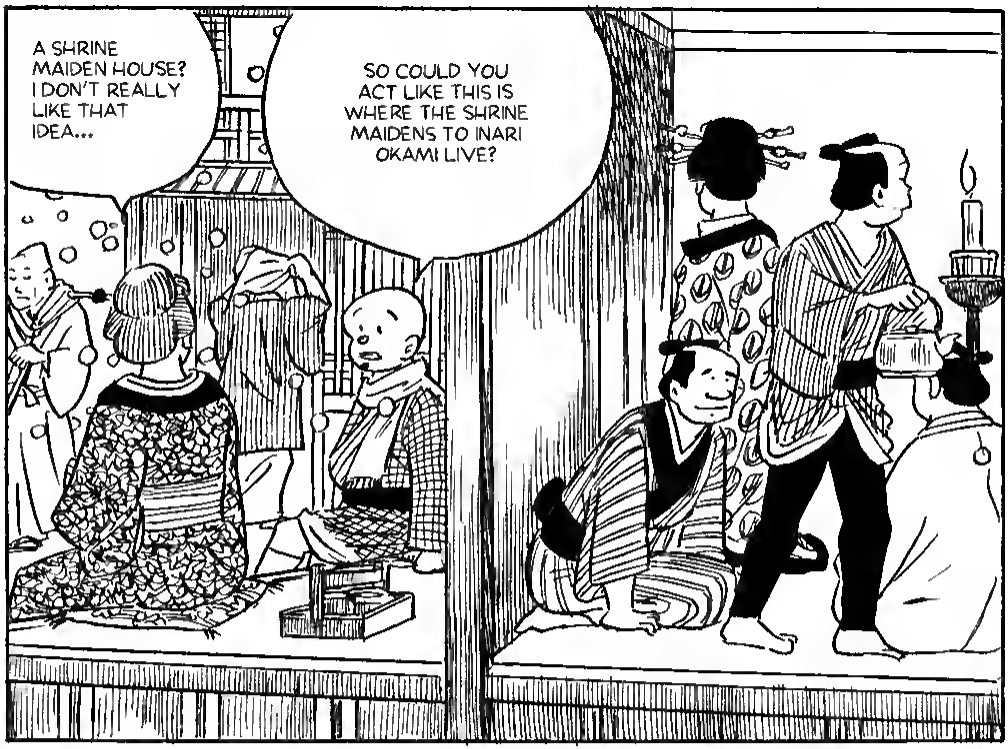

SOME WILL STAY FOR SECLUSION.
I SUPPOSE EVERYONE IS ALSO ON THEIR WAY TO SECLUSION AT THE SHRINE?

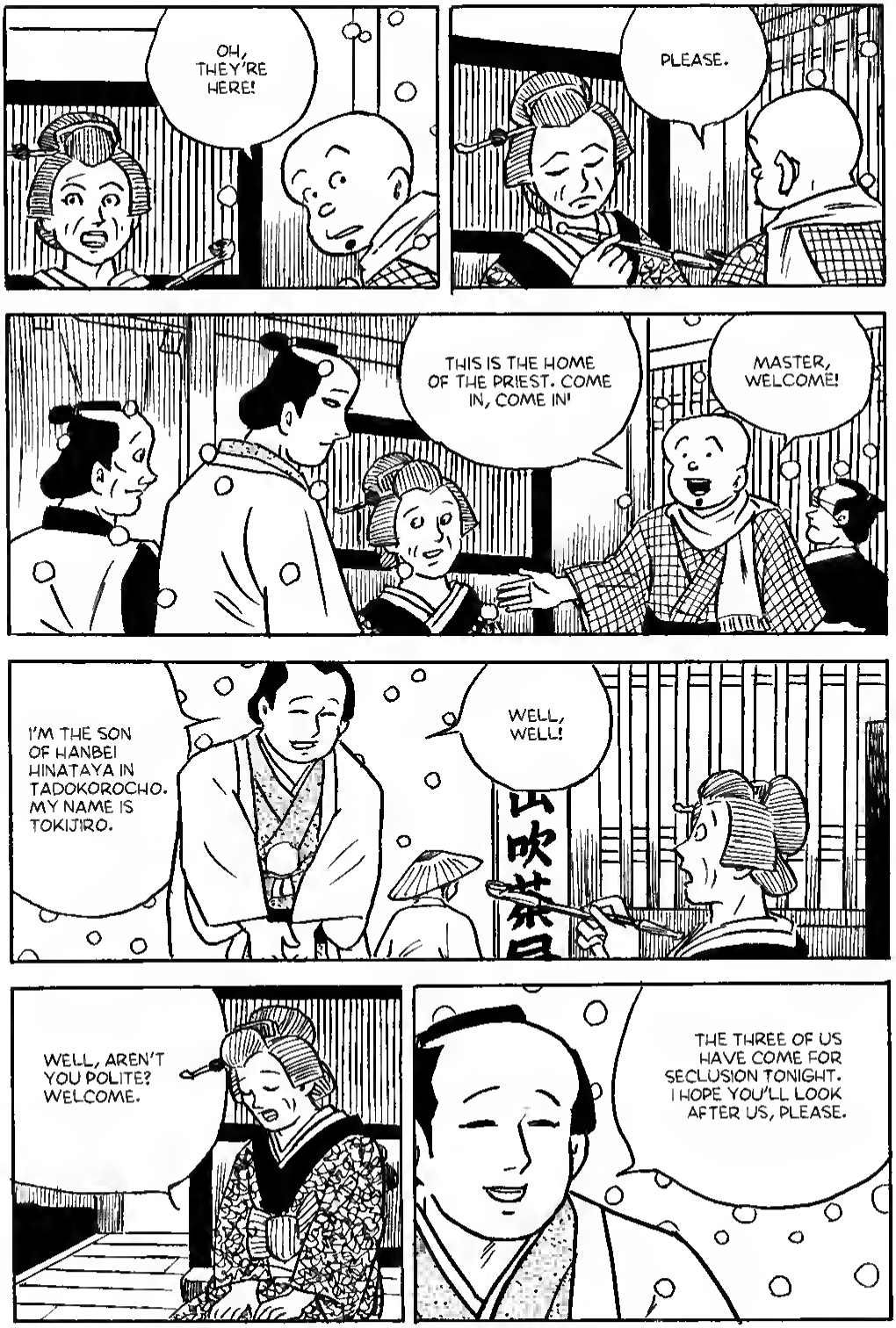

I WOULDN'T. THE TREE IS FILLED WITH GHOSTS.
WELL, IF I GET LOST, I'LL BE STANDING UNDER THIS TREE.
IT'S THE FAMOUS MIKAERI WILLOW THAT WATCHES OVER TRAVELERS. IT'S A SACRED TREE.
WHAT A LARGE WILLOW TREE!
AH, WE'VE COME TO THE ENTRANCE.
UH... WHERE'S THE SHRINE'S GATE?
THIS SHRINE DOESN'T HAVE A GATE.


THE PAPER LANTERNS SURE LOOK PRETTY ALL LIT UP LIKE THAT.
OTHERWISE THEY'LL LET THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG.
WE NEED TO EXPLAIN THE SITUATION TO THEM.
?
PSST! WE HAVE TO GET TO THE TEA SHOP BEFORE HIM.
ACTUALLY, WELL...
MY, WHAT A SURPRISE. WHAT'VE YOU BEEN UP TO?
I'LL RUN AHEAD AND TELL THEM.
HE CAN'T FIND OUT BEFORE THE MISTRESS HAS A CHANCE TO GET HER HANDS ON HIM.


I MENTIONED THIS THE OTHER DAY, BUT WE'VE BROUGHT THAT STRAIGHT-LACED YOUNG MASTER WITH US TONIGHT.


WE TOLD HIM THAT THIS WAS THE INARI OKAMI SECLUSION SHRINE.
HE TURNS NINETEEN THIS YEAR AND HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THE GATES AROUND YOSHI-WARA MEAN.


A SHRINE MAIDEN HOUSE? I DON'T REALLY LIKE THAT IDEA...
SO COULD YOU ACT LIKE THIS IS WHERE THE SHRINE MAIDENS TO INARI OKAMI LIVE?


OH, THEY'RE HERE!
PLEASE.
THIS IS THE HOME OF THE PRIEST. COME IN, COME IN!
MASTER, WELCOME!
I'M THE SON OF HANBEI HINATAYA IN TADOKOROCHO. MY NAME IS TOKIJIRO.
WELL, WELL!
WELL, AREN'T YOU POLITE? WELCOME.
THE THREE OF US HAVE COME FOR SECLUSION TONIGHT. I HOPE YOU'LL LOOK AFTER US, PLEASE.


YOU REALLY ARE QUITE HANDSOME. THE SHRINE MAIDENS WILL BE DELIGHTED.
YOU HAVE QUITE A FAIR COMPLEXION, YOUNG MAN.
NO NEED TO PUSH. I'M GOING.
RIGHT THIS WAY.
HURRY AND SHOW HIM IN.
AAAH!!
THAK
THAK
THAK
THAK


WHAT IS IT, MASTER? I HEARD YOU CRY OUT!
HELP! GENBEI!!
MASTER, IT'S NOTHING TO SHED TEARS OVER!
YOU TWO DECEIVED ME BY BRINGING ME TO SUCH A PLACE...
I ONLY CAME BECAUSE I THOUGHT I WAS GOING INTO SEC-LUSION FOR INARI OKAMI.
THIS IS A BROTHEL, ISN'T IT?
HEY, NOT SO FAST! THIS IS ON YOUR HEAD TOO!!
I THOUGHT I WAS COMING HERE TO PRAY.
IN ANY CASE, YES... THIS IS A BROTHEL.

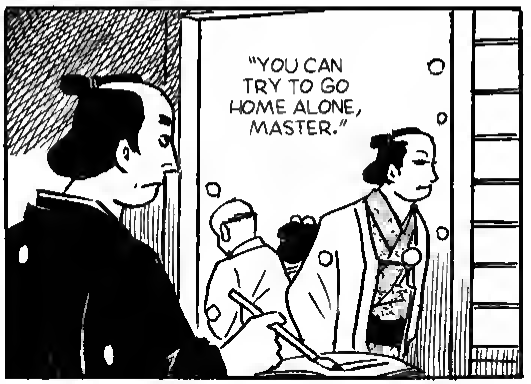

I AM HERE ON MY KNEES BEFORE YOU, OFFERING OUR APOLOGIES. PLEASE FORGIVE US.
MASTER, IT IS TRUE THAT WE DECEIVED YOU AND BROUGHT YOU HERE, AND THAT WAS WRONG.
YES, IT SEEMS LIKE SOMETHING MY FATHER WOULD DO. BUT THE REST OF MY FAMILY WOULD NOT APPROVE. THEY ARE VERY STRICT.
BUT WE DID THIS WITH THE APPROVAL OF YOUR FATHER, SIR. YOU HAVE NO NEED TO WORRY.
NOW, MASTER, WHY NOT STAY FOR A LITTLE WHILE?
IT WOULD BE QUITE TERRIBLE IF THEY WERE TO LEARN ABOUT ALL THIS. I'LL FIND MY WAY HOME.

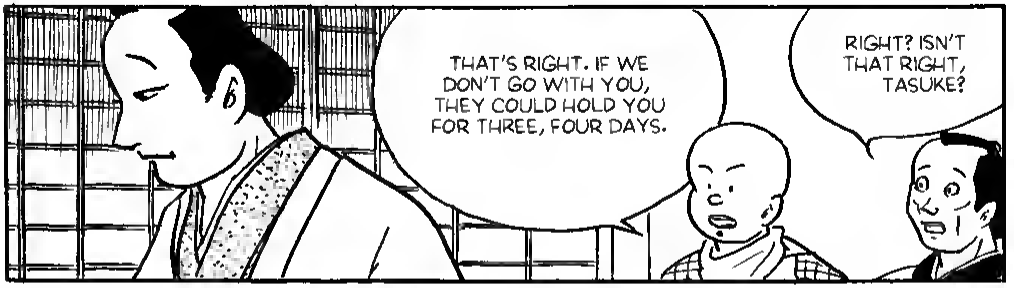

AND THEN WE'LL SEE YOU OFF TO THE GATE.
WE'LL DRINK AND HAVE A GOOD TIME WITH THE GIRLS HERE. YOU KNOW, ENJOY OURSELVES...
FINE. IF YOU WISH TO GO HOME SO BADLY, THEN GO.
YOU TWO, PLEASE STAY AND ENJOY YOURSELVES AS YOU PLEASE UNTIL WHATEVER TIME YOU WISH.
I AM LEAVING.
WHEN WE CAME HERE, WE PASSED THROUGH A LARGE GATE, REMEMBER? THAT WAS THE FAMOUS OMON GATE.
HOWEVER, I MUST TELL YOU ABOUT THE LAW OF YOSHIWARA BEFORE YOU DO.

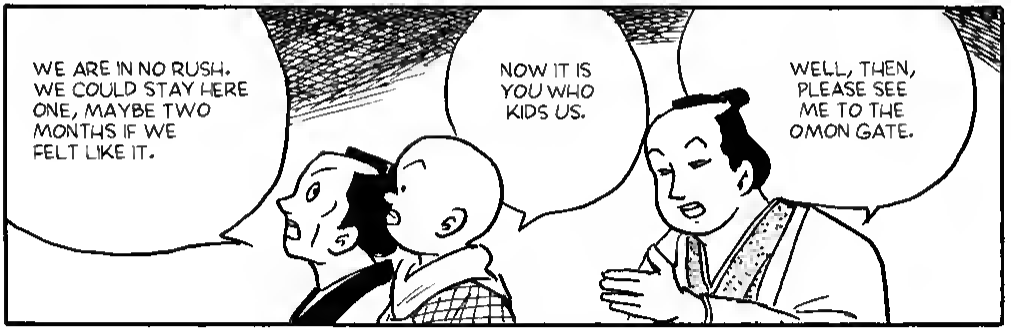
SIGN: GUARD


"RIGHT DOWN TO THE SMALLEST DETAILS, YOU SEE? WHO WAS WEARING WHAT, WHO CAME WITH WHOM, WHERE THEY WENT."
"NEXT TO THE OMON GATE IS A GUARDHOUSE. INSIDE THAT GUARDHOUSE, THERE ARE OFFICIALS WHO OBSERVE EVERY PERSON WHO PASSES BY, AND THEY RECORD THIS INFORMATION IN A LEDGER."


"BUT WE ENTERED AS A GROUP, SO IF ONLY ONE PERSON GOES HOME, THEY'LL THINK THAT QUITE SUSPICIOUS AND ARREST YOU."


"YOU CAN TRY TO GO HOME ALONE, MASTER."

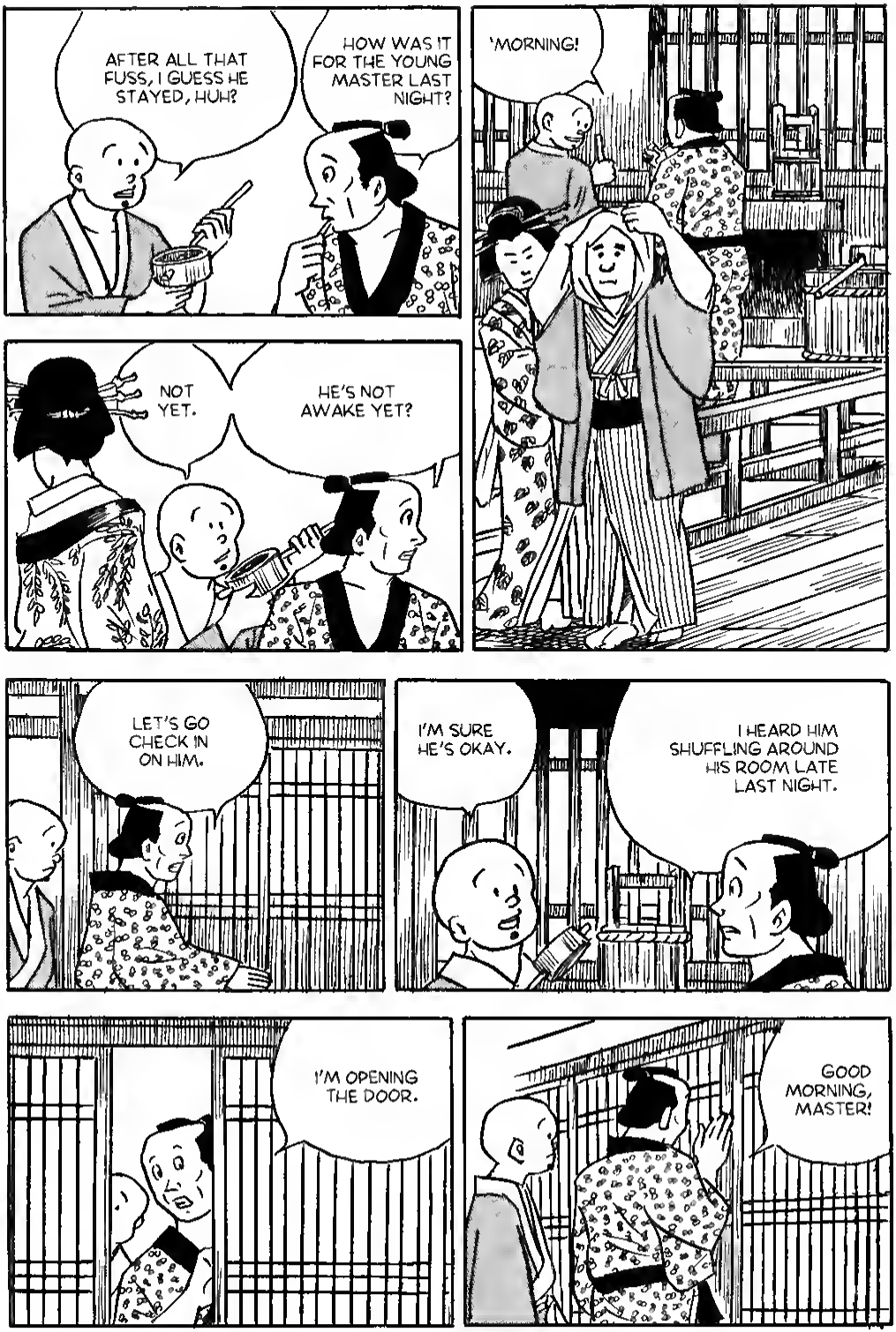

THAT'S RIGHT. IF WE DON'T GO WITH YOU, THEY COULD HOLD YOU FOR THREE, FOUR DAYS.
RIGHT? ISN'T THAT RIGHT, TASUKE?


WE ARE IN NO RUSH. WE COULD STAY HERE ONE, MAYBE TWO MONTHS IF WE FELT LIKE IT.
NOW IT IS YOU WHO KIDS US.
WELL, THEN, PLEASE SEE ME TO THE OMON GATE.

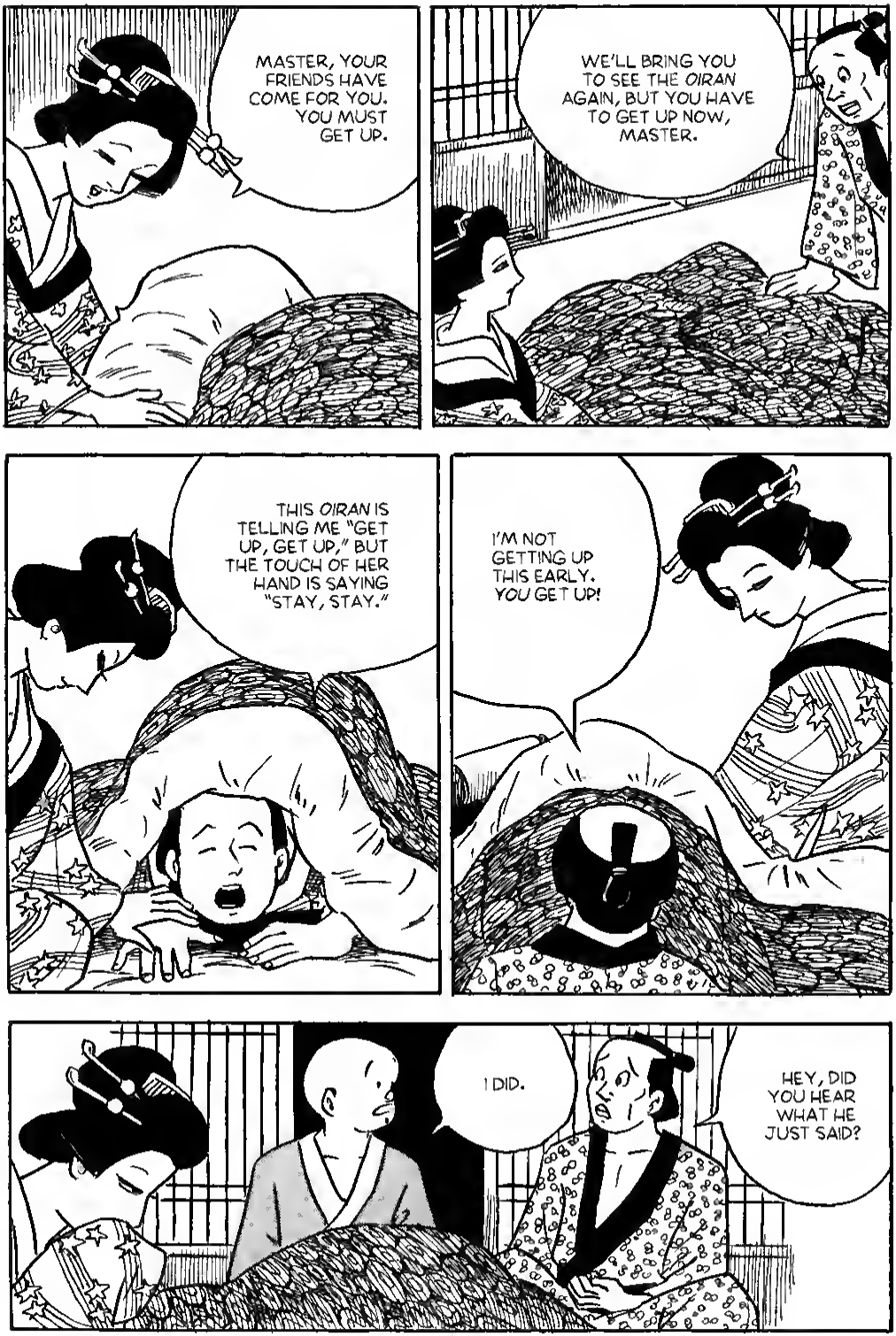

MMM... PLEASE HURRY AND DRINK, THEN.
AT THE VERY LEAST, WHY DON'T YOU JOIN US FOR A DRINK?
YOU'RE KIDDING!
PLEASE DRINK FROM THIS BUCKET.
IF YOU'RE GOING TO POUR SAKE, USE A BIG CUP PLEASE.
WE'LL DRINK ALL NIGHT.
IF YOU'RE GOING TO CRY...
HONESTLY. SAKE FROM A BUCKET WOULD TASTE TERRIBLE.


MASTER, WE HAVE AN UNOCCUPIED ROOM...
THE SAKE IS NOT WORKING. MADAME, PLEASE HELP.
WHY DON'T YOU GO IN THERE AND REST A BIT?
THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN, BUT I'M FINE RIGHT HERE.
I'M NOT GOING INTO AN OIRAN'S ROOM! I'LL CATCH A TERRIBLE DISEASE.
COME NOW, MASTER!
THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH.
NOW THEN, MASTER, PLEASE COME THIS WAY!
OH HO...YOU HEAR THAT? A "TERRIBLE DISEASE"! IT'S BEDTIME FOR HIM, I THINK!


SHOVE
ALL RIGHT THEN!
GENBEEE!
LET GO OF ME.
AH!!
AREN'T YOU A HATEFUL LITTLE MAN!
SLUMP
TREMBLE


AFTER ALL THAT FUSS, I GUESS HE STAYED, HUH?
HOW WAS IT FOR THE YOUNG MASTER LAST NIGHT?
'MORNING!
NOT YET.
HE'S NOT AWAKE YET?
LET'S GO CHECK IN ON HIM.
I'M SURE HE'S OKAY.
I HEARD HIM SHUFFLING AROUND HIS ROOM LATE LAST NIGHT.
I'M OPENING THE DOOR.
GOOD MORNING, MASTER!

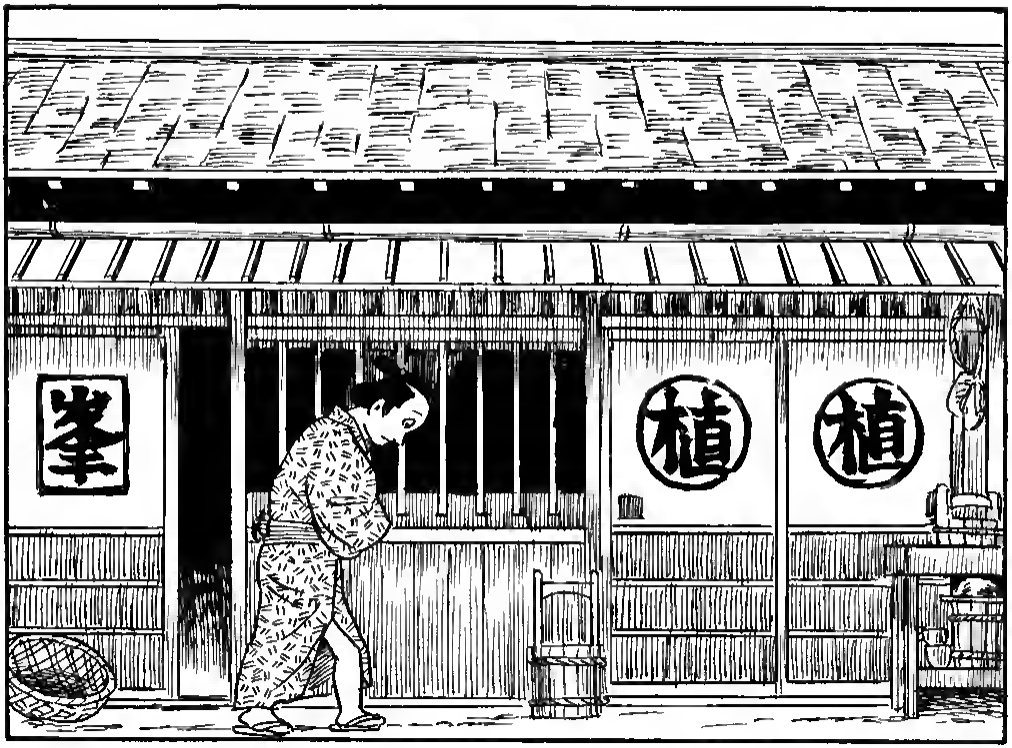

SIR, I'M MOVING THE SCREEN.
OH HO! A GIANT CHERRY BLOSSOM BLOCKING THE BED. HE MUST BE WITH QUITE THE LADY!
NOW WHERE ARE YOU?
GUESS ALL THAT FUSSING LAST NIGHT WAS A REAL MISTAKE, HMM?
WELL, LOOK HERE! HE'S TURNED BEET RED AND BURROWED INTO THE FUTON!
YES, WELL, IT WAS AN EXTREMELY NICE SECLUSION...
MAS-TER!
HOW WAS IT? LAST NIGHT.

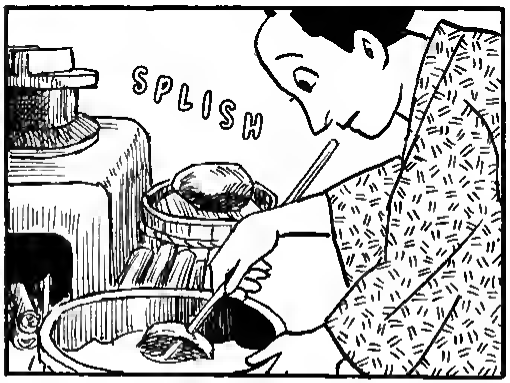

MASTER, YOUR FRIENDS HAVE COME FOR YOU. YOU MUST GET UP.
WE'LL BRING YOU TO SEE THE OIRAN AGAIN, BUT YOU HAVE TO GET UP NOW, MASTER.
THIS OIRAN IS TELLING ME "GET UP, GET UP," BUT THE TOUCH OF HER HAND IS SAYING "STAY, STAY."
I'M NOT GETTING UP THIS EARLY. YOU GET UP!
I DID.
HEY, DID YOU HEAR WHAT HE JUST SAID?

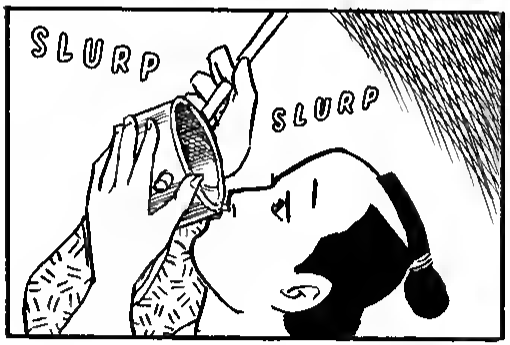

"MY RELATIVES ARE SO STRICT, THEY'LL NEVER FORGIVE ME..."
"I DON'T WANT TO CATCH SOME TERRIBLE DISEASE..."
DID YOU FORGET HOW YOU BEHAVED LAST NIGHT?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
WAIT! I'LL COME WITH YOU!
THAT'S IT, I'M DONE HERE!
YOU REALLY ARE HOPE-LESS.
AH! TASUKE, YOU FELL DOWN THE STAIRS?!
THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP


YOU JUST STAY HERE AND ENJOY YOURSELF.
WELL, MASTER, WE HAVE SOME THINGS TO DO, SO WE'LL HEAD HOME BEFORE YOU.
YOU'LL NEVER GET PAST THAT GUARDHOUSE!
HA! IF THE TWO OF YOU WOULD LIKE TO GO HOME WITHOUT ME, YOU JUST GO AHEAD AND TRY.


THE GOD OF DEATH
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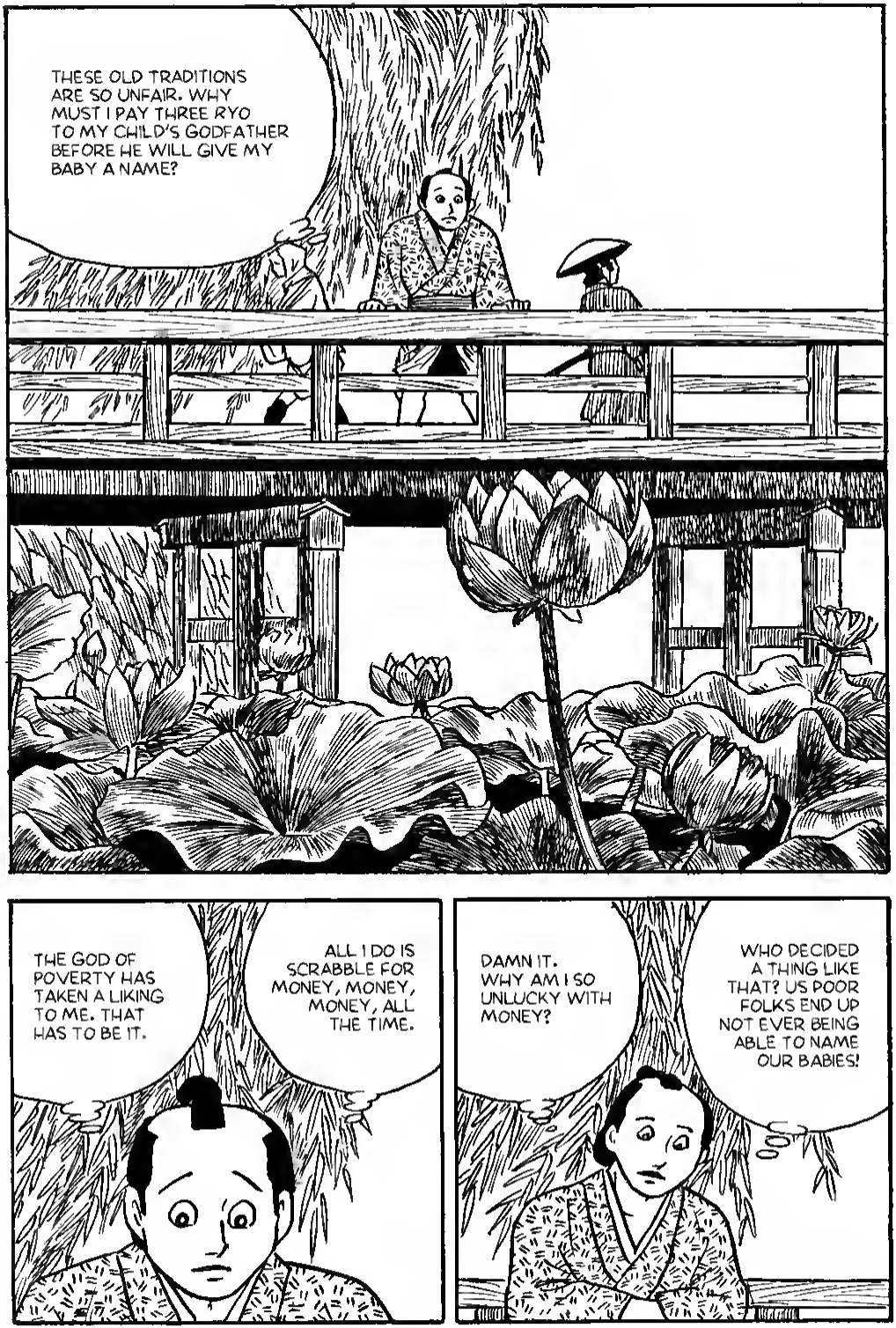

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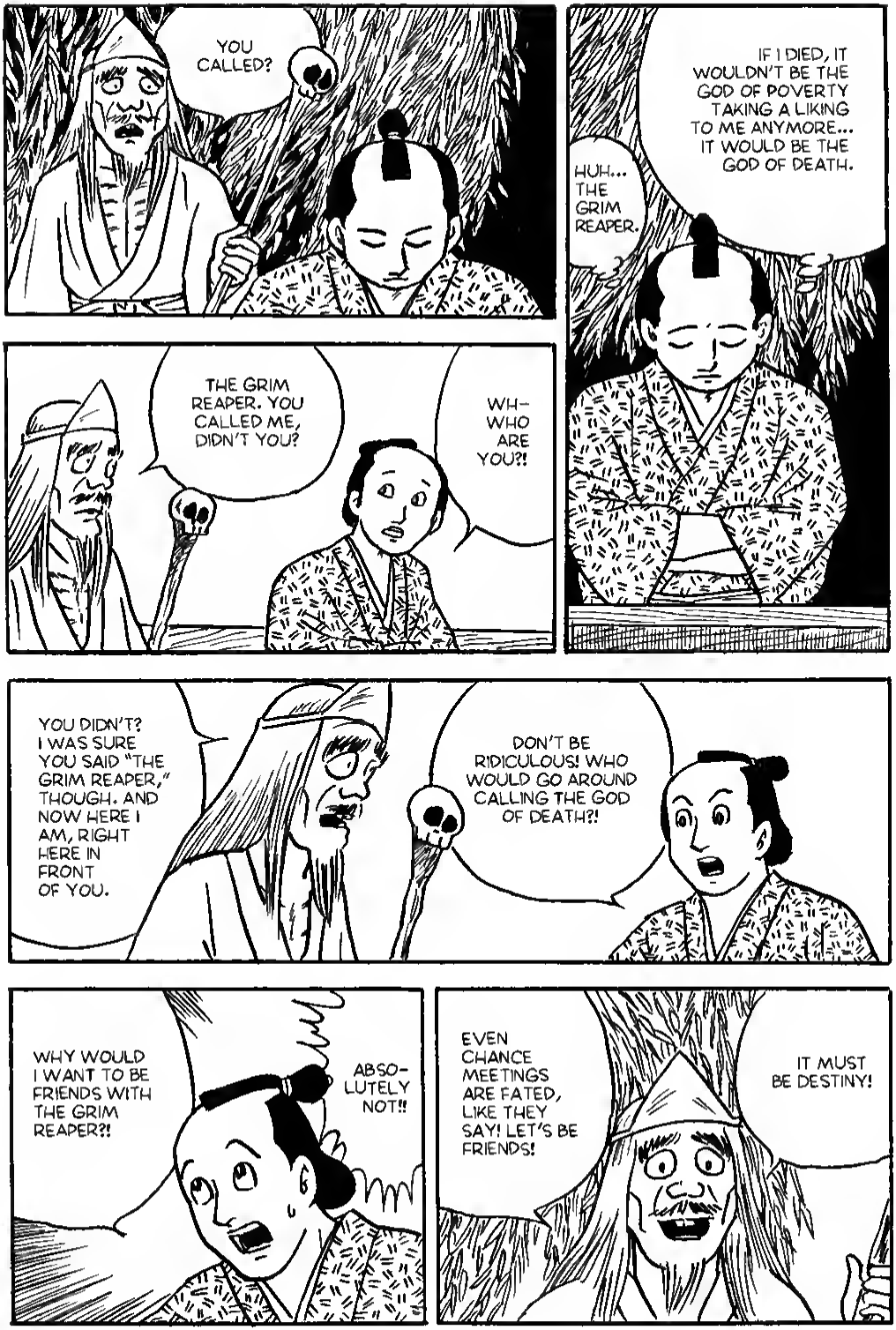

SPLISH

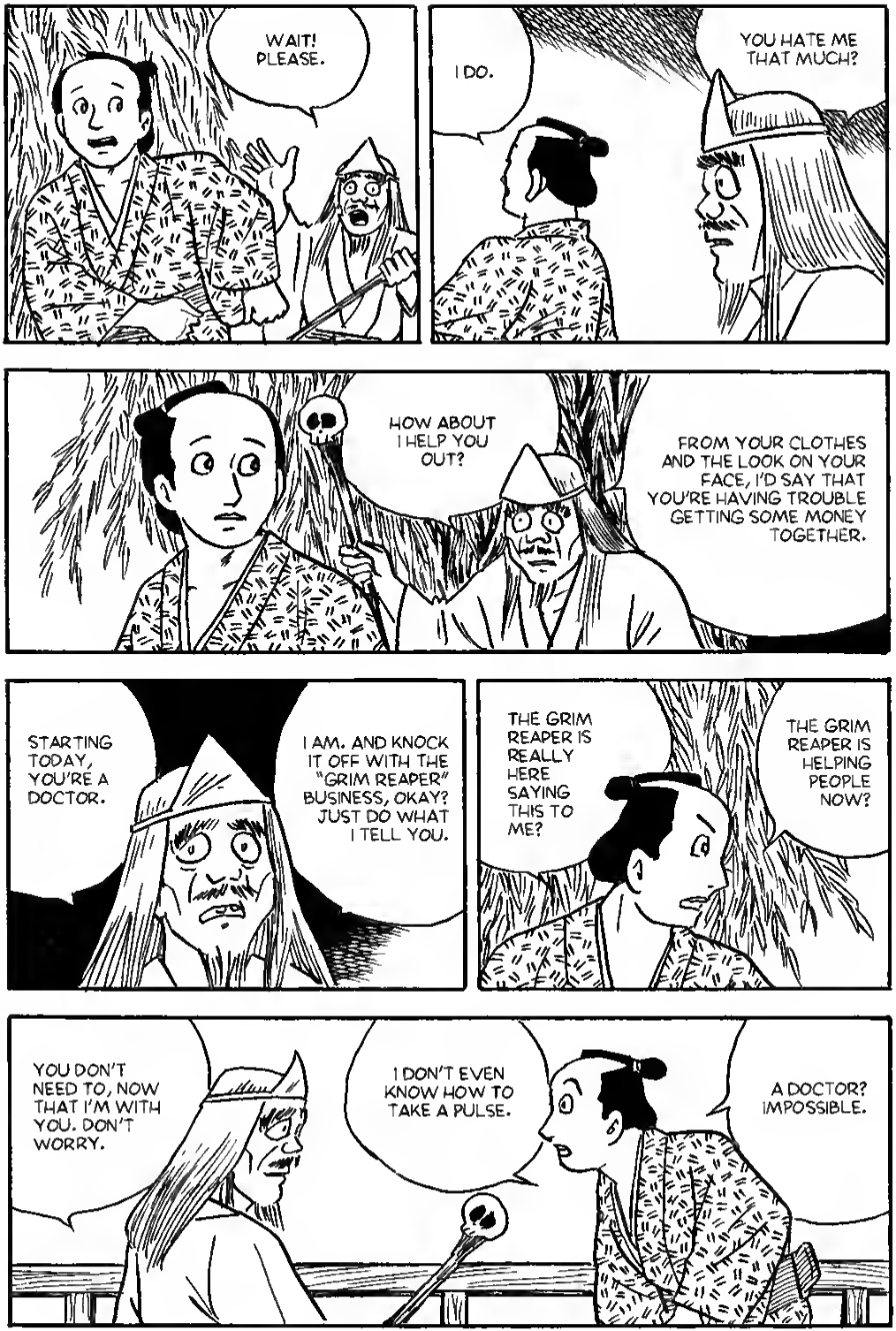

SLURP
SLURP


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IS THAT YOU, HONEY? DID YOU BRING BACK AT LEAST THREE RYO?
PHEW.
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU: DON'T COME HOME UNTIL YOU'VE MANAGED TO GET THREE RYO!
WITH THAT LOOK ON YOUR FACE, I'M GUESSING NOT, HM?
YOUR DADDY CAN'T BE COUNTED ON, SO WE CAN'T GIVE YOU A NAME.
NO NEED TO CRY, MY LITTLE NAMELESS NOBODY!
YOU CAN'T JUST COME WALTZING IN HERE EMPTY-HANDED. GET BACK OUT THERE.
SHH! IT'S OKAY, SHH SHHHH!
WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH


THESE OLD TRADITIONS ARE SO UNFAIR. WHY MUST I PAY THREE RYO TO MY CHILD'S GODFATHER BEFORE HE WILL GIVE MY BABY A NAME?
THE GOD OF POVERTY HAS TAKEN A LIKING TO ME. THAT HAS TO BE IT.
ALL I DO IS SCRABBLE FOR MONEY, MONEY, MONEY, ALL THE TIME.
DAMN IT. WHY AM I SO UNLUCKY WITH MONEY?
WHO DECIDED A THING LIKE THAT? US POOR FOLKS END UP NOT EVER BEING ABLE TO NAME OUR BABIES!

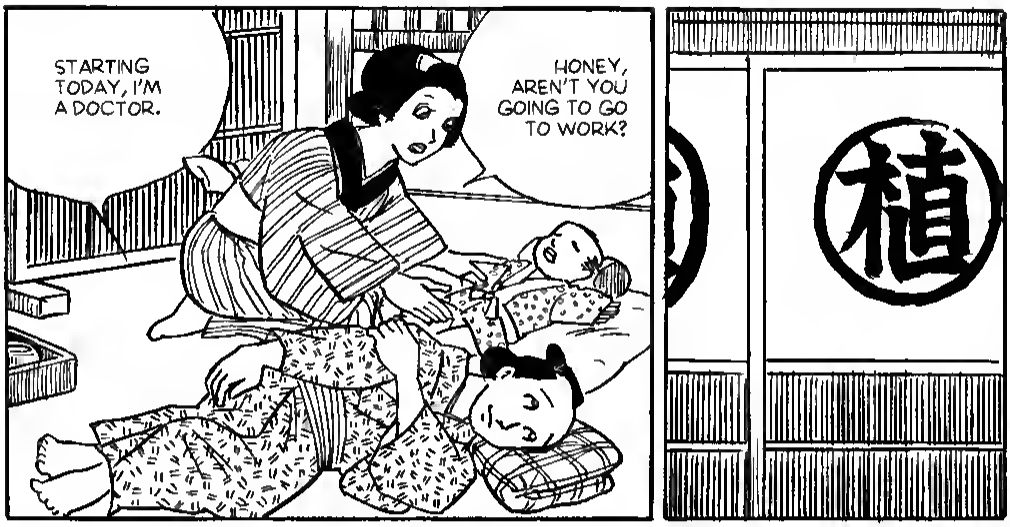

YOU CALLED?
IF I DIED, IT WOULDN'T BE THE GOD OF POVERTY TAKING A LIKING TO ME ANYMORE... IT WOULD BE THE GOD OF DEATH.
HUH... THE GRIM REAPER.
THE GRIM REAPER. YOU CALLED ME, DIDN'T YOU?
WH-WHO ARE YOU?!
YOU DIDN'T? I WAS SURE YOU SAID "THE GRIM REAPER," THOUGH. AND NOW HERE I AM, RIGHT HERE IN FRONT OF YOU.
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS! WHO WOULD GO AROUND CALLING THE GOD OF DEATH?!
WHY WOULD I WANT TO BE FRIENDS WITH THE GRIM REAPER?!
ABSO-LUTELY NOT!!
EVEN CHANCE MEETINGS ARE FATED, LIKE THEY SAY! LET'S BE FRIENDS!
IT MUST BE DESTINY!


WAIT! PLEASE.
I DO.
YOU HATE ME THAT MUCH?
HOW ABOUT I HELP YOU OUT?
FROM YOUR CLOTHES AND THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE, I'D SAY THAT YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE GETTING SOME MONEY TOGETHER.
STARTING TODAY, YOU'RE A DOCTOR.
I AM. AND KNOCK IT OFF WITH THE "GRIM REAPER" BUSINESS, OKAY? JUST DO WHAT I TELL YOU.
THE GRIM REAPER IS REALLY HERE SAYING THIS TO ME?
THE GRIM REAPER IS HELPING PEOPLE NOW?
YOU DON'T NEED TO, NOW THAT I'M WITH YOU. DON'T WORRY.
I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO TAKE A PULSE.
A DOCTOR? IMPOSSIBLE.


AND NO MATTER HOW LIVELY AND HEALTHY SOMEONE IS, IF THEY'VE GOT NO LIFESPAN LEFT, IT'S OVER.
OKAY...HUMAN BEINGS HAVE WHAT'S CALLED A LIFESPAN. NO MATTER HOW SICK SOMEONE IS, IF THEY'VE STILL GOT SOME OF THEIR LIFESPAN LEFT, THEY WILL LIVE.
YOU JUST GO TO THE SICK PERSON'S SIDE, AND LOOK AT HIS FEET OR HIS HEAD.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO FAKE DOING ANY OF THOSE DOCTOR THINGS.
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SEE ME. TO ALL THESE OTHER PEOPLE, I'M INVISIBLE.

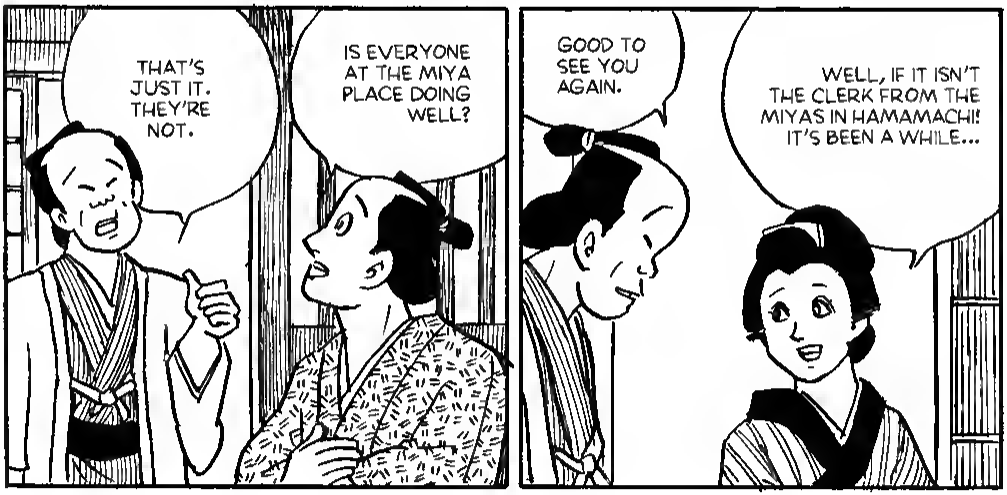

I'LL ENTER THE PATIENT'S ROOM BEFORE YOU.
"THERE'S NO HELPING HIM."
"BUT IF I'M SITTING AT HIS HEAD, IT'S TOO LATE."
"IF I'M SITTING AT HIS FEET, THEN THAT PATIENT WILL LIVE. NO MATTER HOW SICK HE IS, HE'LL BE FINE IN THE END."
BUT IF I'M SITTING AT HIS HEAD, YOU TELL THEM THERE'S NO CHANCE HE'LL MAKE IT.
UNDERSTAND? IF I'M SITTING AT HIS FEET, YOU GUARANTEE THAT YOU CAN SAVE HIM. MAKE HIM DRINK SOME TEA OR SOMETHING, AS IF IT'S MEDICINE.


HUH...?
COME ON. THERE'S NO WAY I COULD BE A DOCTOR.
THAT'S... THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
OKAY? BE SURE TO REMEMBER.
AND ONLY I CAN SEE THE GRIM REAPER...
A DOCTOR, HUH...

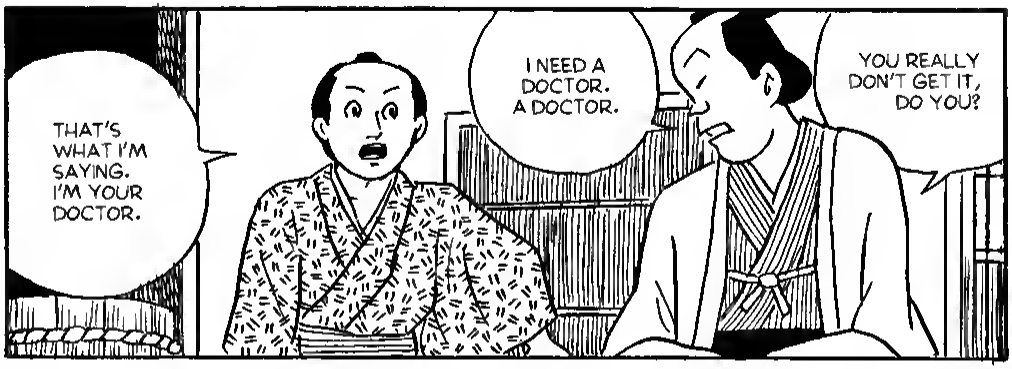

STARTING TODAY, I'M A DOCTOR.
HONEY, AREN'T YOU GOING TO GO TO WORK?
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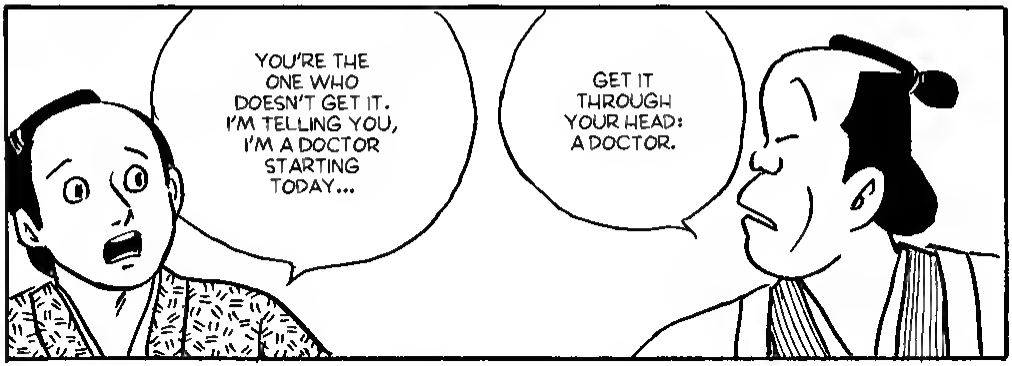
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HULLO!
IT'S NOT NONSENSE. IT'S THE TRUTH.
WHAT NONSENSE ARE YOU TALKING NOW?

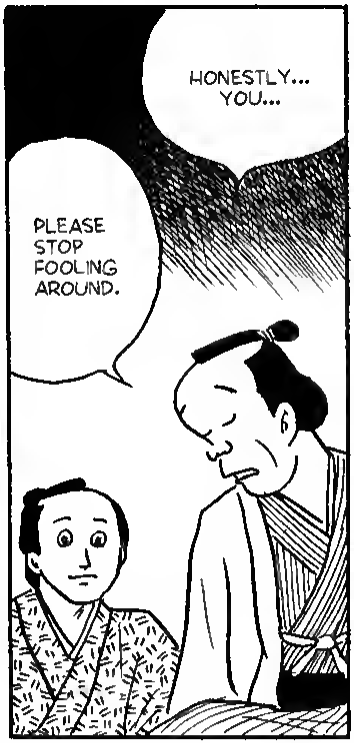

THAT'S JUST IT. THEY'RE NOT.
IS EVERYONE AT THE MIYA PLACE DOING WELL?
GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
WELL, IF IT ISN'T THE CLERK FROM THE MIYAS IN HAMAMACHI! IT'S BEEN A WHILE...


SHE'S BEEN SEEN BY SEVERAL DOCTORS BUT THERE'S BEEN NO IMPROVEMENT IN HER CONDITION. WE'RE ALL VERY WORRIED.
THE YOUNG MISS HAS BEEN SICK FOR SOME TIME.
THE MASTER IS SICK, OR...?
WE THOUGHT MAYBE THE DOCTORS WERE COMING FROM UNLUCKY AREAS OR SOMETHING, SO WE HAD A SPIRITUALIST COME AND TAKE A LOOK. HE TOLD US THAT WE SHOULD HAVE A DOCTOR FROM AROUND HERE COME AND LOOK AT HER.
THE YOUNG MISS IS ILL?!
YOUR CLUE IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU!
BUT I HAVEN'T A CLUE WHERE TO FIND A GOOD DOCTOR AROUND HERE.
SO I'M HERE ON THE MASTER'S ORDERS LOOKING FOR ONE...
ME! I'M YOUR MAN. I'LL GO.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THERE'RE NO DOCTORS HERE. WHERE CAN I...
YOU HAVE A GREAT DOCTOR RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU.
IT'S YOUR LUCKY DAY!


THAT'S WHAT I'M SAYING. I'M YOUR DOCTOR.
I NEED A DOCTOR. A DOCTOR.
YOU REALLY DON'T GET IT, DO YOU?


YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DOESN'T GET IT. I'M TELLING YOU, I'M A DOCTOR STARTING TODAY...
GET IT THROUGH YOUR HEAD: A DOCTOR.


DON'T WORRY. I'LL TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR PATIENT, AND IF SHE CAN BE HEALED, I'LL FIX HER RIGHT UP!
I CAN'T EXACTLY BRING HOME A CHARACTER LIKE YOU AND SAY HE'S A DOCTOR.


HONESTLY... YOU...
PLEASE STOP FOOLING AROUND.



SIGNS: INTERNATIONAL SILK WHOLESALER


BUT HE'S A BIT OF A STRANGE DOCTOR...SAYS HE JUST BECAME A DOCTOR TODAY SOMEHOW.
NO. YES, WELL, KIND OF.
DID YOU FIND A DOCTOR?
HE SAYS HE'S A GOOD DOCTOR, AND THAT WE SHOULD LEAVE EVERY-THING TO HIM. HE FOLLOWED ME BACK HERE.
YOU'RE SAYING THAT HE'S NOT MUCH OF A DOCTOR, AREN'T YOU?
DON'T JOKE AROUND.
BRING HIM IN.
IF HE'S HERE, HE'S HERE. I SUPPOSE WE SHOULD AT LEAST HAVE HIM TAKE HER PULSE OR SOMETHING.
YOU BROUGHT HIM WITH YOU, DID YOU?
WHAT'S THIS?
HM, THIS IS THE DOCTOR?
OH, HELLO!
YOU CAN COME IN.

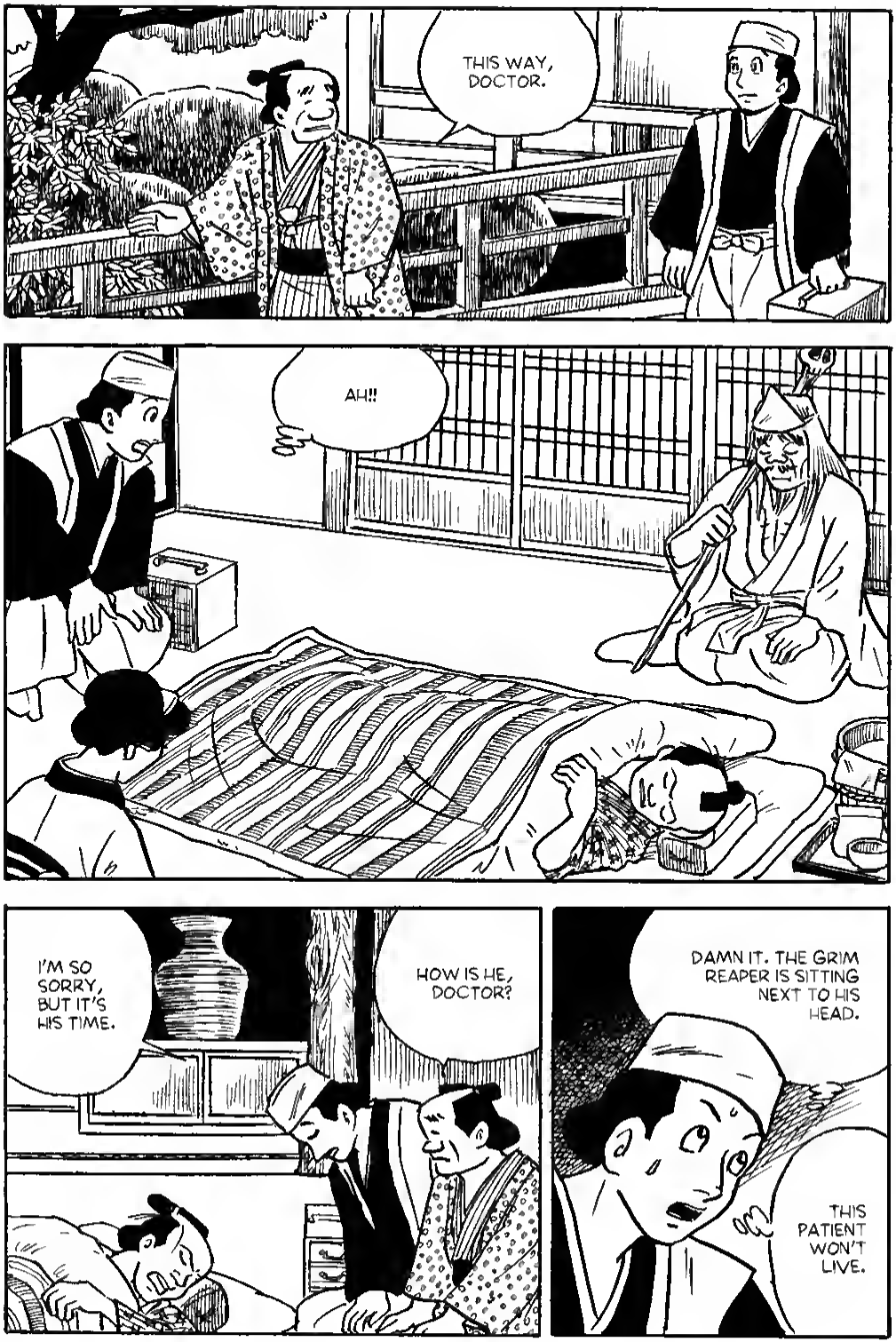

MM. SHE'S SLEEPING PEACEFULLY.
HA HA! I SEE, IT'S YOUR DAUGHTER, IS IT?
MM HMM.
MIGHT AS WELL TAKE A LOOK AT THE PATIENT.
YES, SIR.
CLERK, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE YOU TO TAKE MEDICINE FROM HIM.
!


REALLY?!
SIR, YOU CAN RELAX. YOUR DAUGHTER'S GOING TO BE JUST FINE.
GREAT! THE GRIM REAPER IS SITTING BY HER FEET.
YOU DON'T NEED TO TAKE HER PULSE?
SHE'LL BE BACK TO HERSELF QUITE SOON. JUST GIVE HER SOME TEA OR SOMETHING TO DRINK.
I GUARANTEE IT. NO NEED FOR WORRY.
SEE?
I'LL CHECK IN AGAIN LATER.
FATHER! SUDDENLY I FEEL PERFECTLY FINE!

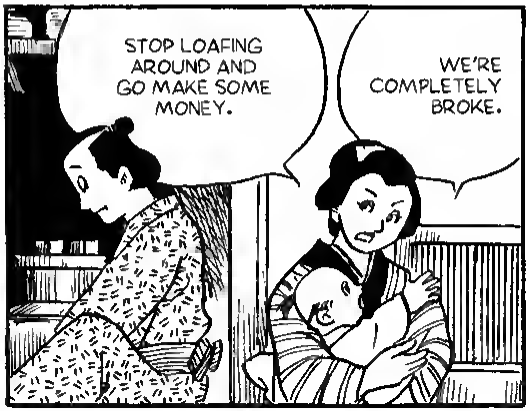

YES, YES.
HURRY! THIS WAY, DOCTOR!
SOON, WORD SPREAD THROUGH ALL OF EDO, AND THE MAN WAS SUDDENLY IN GREAT DEMAND. HE WAS CALLED HERE AND THERE AT ALL HOURS.
ALL RIGHT! THE GRIM REAPER IS AT THE FEET OF THE PATIENT AGAIN.
AAAH, UNNNH!
NNGH!
HE'S IN TERRIBLE SHAPE.

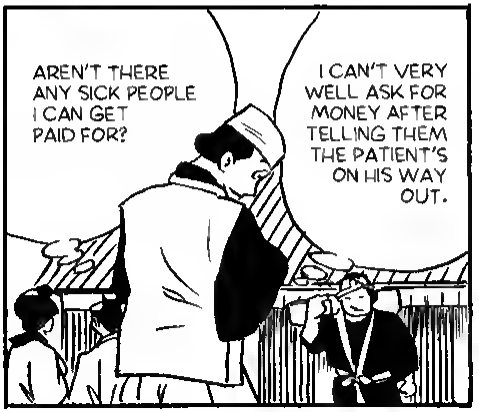

THE MONEY BEGAN TO PILE UP.
HE WAS STRANGELY LUCKY: THE GOD OF DEATH WAS ALWAYS SITTING AT THE PATIENT'S FEET, AND SO, THEY ALL LIVED.
REALLY, HONEY?
HEY, LET'S GO ON A TRIP! HOW ABOUT A HOT SPRING? I'LL SHOW YOU KYOTO!
WE CAN'T USE ALL THIS.
CLINK CLINK
THIS COUPLE, ONCE SO TROUBLED OVER THREE RYO, PACKED UP THEIR HOUSEHOLD FOR A SIGHTSEEING TRIP TO KYOTO.

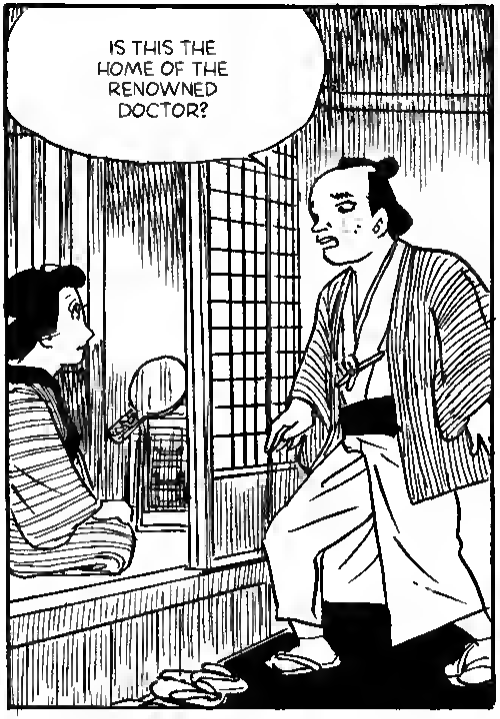

HA HA HA!
WE'VE GOT THE MONEY. AND GET US A GEISHA, TOO.
MISS, BRING US MORE TO EAT.
BUT EVEN GREAT WEALTH CANNOT LAST FOREVER.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. I CAN JUST GO BACK TO BEING A DOCTOR.
WHEN THE FAMILY RETURNED TO EDO, THEY WERE PENNILESS AGAIN.

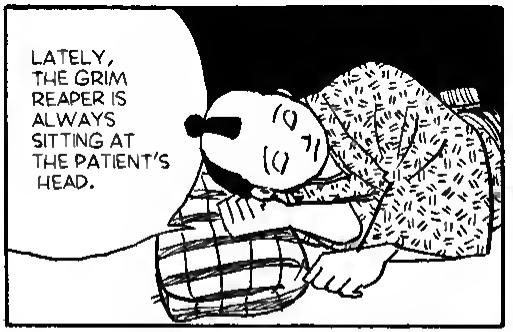

THIS WAY, DOCTOR.
AH!!
I'M SO SORRY, BUT IT'S HIS TIME.
HOW IS HE, DOCTOR?
DAMN IT. THE GRIM REAPER IS SITTING NEXT TO HIS HEAD.
THIS PATIENT WON'T LIVE.


OH...


STOP LOAFING AROUND AND GO MAKE SOME MONEY.
WE'RE COMPLETELY BROKE.


AREN'T THERE ANY SICK PEOPLE I CAN GET PAID FOR?
I CAN'T VERY WELL ASK FOR MONEY AFTER TELLING THEM THE PATIENT'S ON HIS WAY OUT.


IS THIS THE HOME OF THE RENOWNED DOCTOR?


LATELY, THE GRIM REAPER IS ALWAYS SITTING AT THE PATIENT'S HEAD.


COMING!
ER, EXCUSE ME!


EVERYONE KNOWS THEM. THEY'RE RICH.
THE ISEYAS IN HAMAMACHI?
A JOB FOR YOU, HONEY.
THE ISEYA FAMILY IN HAMAMACHI SENT A MESSEN-GER.
GOOD LUCK!
YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T BE SO HAPPY TO HEAR ABOUT A SICK MAN...
CHAK CHAK
MM HMM!!
EXACTLY. AND THE MASTER OF THIS RICH FAMILY IS NOT IN GOOD CONDITION. THEY WANT YOU TO SEE HIM...
DOCTOR, WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU.
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SIGNS: ISEYA

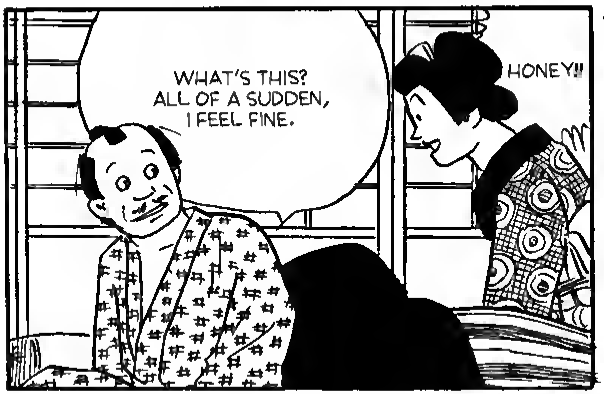

PLEASE, LET THE GRIM REAPER BE AT HIS FEET, PLEASE...
PLEASE EXAMINE HIM AT ONCE.
RIGHT THIS WAY, DOCTOR.
AH!!
...IT'S HOPELESS?
I AM TRULY SORRY, BUT THERE IS NOTHING I CAN DO FOR THIS MAN.
I KNEW IT. SITTING AT THE HEAD AGAIN!!


IF YOU BRING HIM BACK TO US, I'LL GIVE YOU A THOUSAND RYO!
I HONESTLY WOULD LIKE TO HELP HIM, BUT HIS TIME HAS COME, THAT'S ALL...
ISN'T THERE ANYTHING YOU COULD PLEASE DO TO SAVE HIM FOR US, DOCTOR?
IT'S TOO LATE.
YAWN!
THEN HOW ABOUT TWO THOUSAND RYO?
A THOUSAND RYO...BUT THERE'S REALLY NOTHING I CAN DO.
THREE THOUSAND RYO!!
THREE THOU-SAND RYO!!
NO, I REALLY WOULD LIKE TO HELP HIM, BUT IT'S JUST...


THE GRIM REAPER IS EXHAUSTED. HE'S FALLEN ASLEEP.
NOD
DROOP
OF COURSE I WILL! I ABSOLUTELY WILL.
PLEASE COME CLOSER. IF I SAVE YOUR HUSBAND, WILL YOU REALLY GIVE ME THREE THOUSAND RYO?
SORRY FOR THE WAIT!!
THAT WAS FAST.
WHAT?
IN THAT CASE, PLEASE HAVE FOUR OF YOUR STRONGEST MEN COME QUICKLY.
ONE MOMENT!!
HURRY!
SNRRRK.


WE'VE GOT IT.
NOW LISTEN. YOU FOUR EACH QUIETLY GRAB A CORNER OF THE PATIENT'S FUTON.
YES, SIR.
SPIN HIM AROUND LIKE THIS.
FWWWP


NOW THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE WILL BE FINE.
GOOD! NICE WORK.

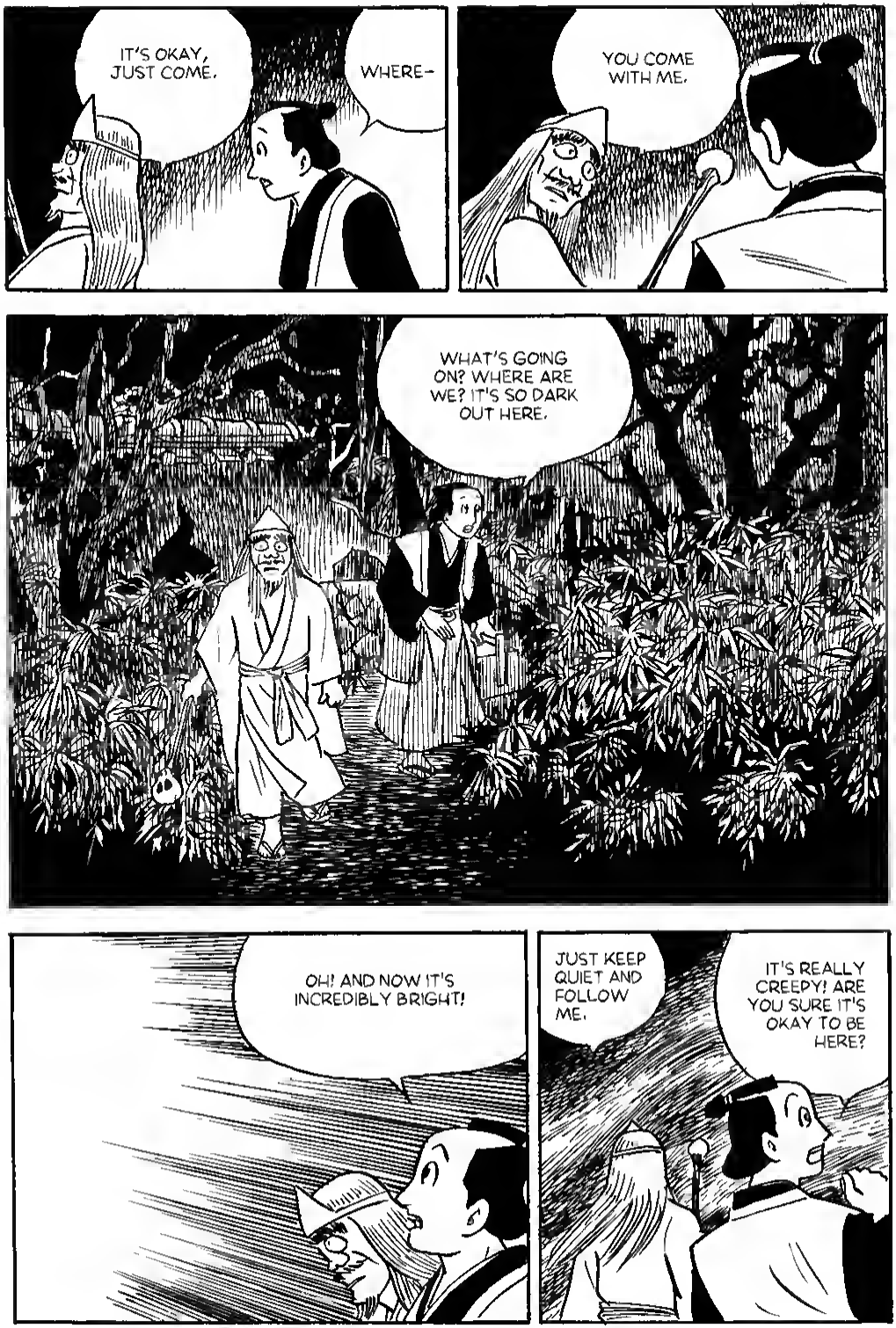

WHAT'S THIS? ALL OF A SUDDEN, I FEEL FINE.
HONEY!!


SNRRK

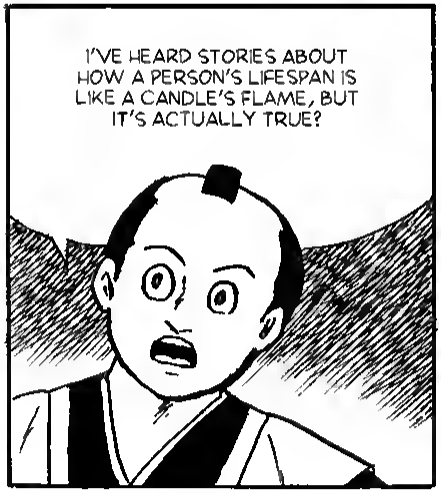

YOU NEEDN'T WORRY. OUR YOUNG MEN WILL DELIVER IT TO YOU.
I CAN'T TAKE IT ALL HOME AT ONCE.

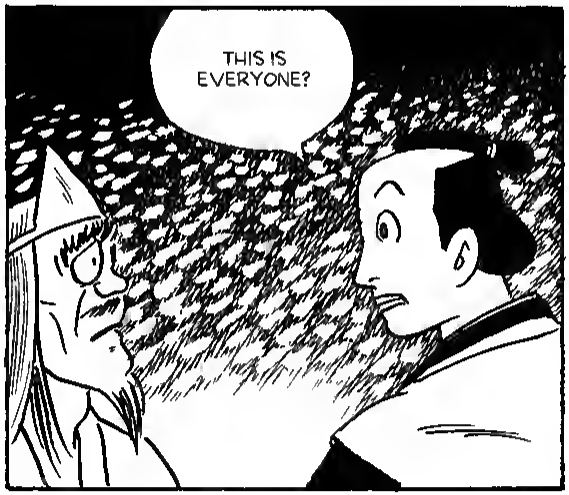

THANK YOU.
THANKS TO YOU, MY HUSBAND HAS RECOVERED COMPLETELY. HERE IS THE THREE THOUSAND RYO I PROMISED YOU.


WE WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT MONEY FOR A WHILE NOW.
HEH HEH HEH...THREE THOUSAND RYO, THAT'S FANTASTIC!
DOCTOR, THANK YOU SO MUCH.
OH, THE GRIM REAPER!
HEY!
THEY OFFERED THREE THOUSAND RYO, AND WELL... IT WAS A SUDDEN IMPULSE...
I'M SORRY. I'VE BEEN HAVING SOME PROBLEMS WITH MONEY, AND...
I CAME TO GET MY REVENGE.
PLEASE DON'T THINK POORLY OF ME.
I APOLOGIZE, DEATH.
YOU FORCIBLY SAVED A MAN WHO SHOULDN'T HAVE LIVED.
THERE WAS NO HELPING THAT MAN. TO BE BLINDED TO THAT BY THREE THOUSAND RYO...


IT'S OKAY, JUST COME.
WHERE-
YOU COME WITH ME.
WHAT'S GOING ON? WHERE ARE WE? IT'S SO DARK OUT HERE.
OH! AND NOW IT'S INCREDIBLY BRIGHT!
JUST KEEP QUIET AND FOLLOW ME.
IT'S REALLY CREEPY! ARE YOU SURE IT'S OKAY TO BE HERE?


LOOK AT THIS! SO MANY CANDLES!
EACH ONE REPRESENTS A PERSON'S LIFESPAN. TOGETHER, THESE ARE THE LIFESPANS FOR ALL MANKIND.


I'VE HEARD STORIES ABOUT HOW A PERSON'S LIFESPAN IS LIKE A CANDLE'S FLAME, BUT IT'S ACTUALLY TRUE?


THIS IS EVERYONE?


HA HA HA! THAT'S HIS, IS IT? HE'S DOING ALL RIGHT.
THAT'S YOUR SON.
THIS CANDLE HERE IS UNBELIEVABLY LONG. AND WHAT A STRONG FLAME!
IT IS? SHE HAS A FAIR BIT LEFT TOO.
THAT'S YOUR WIFE.
AND THE ONE NEXT TO IT THAT'S ABOUT HALF BURNED?
THAT'S YOURS.
MY! THERE'S THIS ONE NEXT TO HERS THAT LOOKS LIKE IT COULD GO OUT ANY SECOND.
FSST

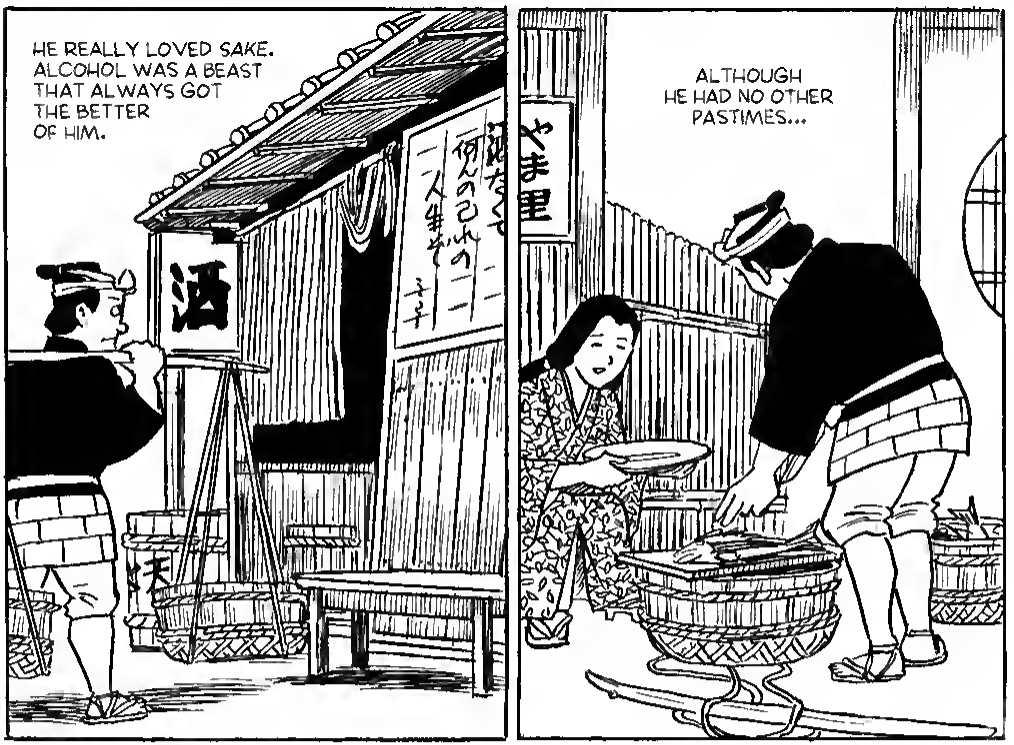

ONCE IT GOES OUT, YOU DIE.
THAT'S YOUR LIFE-SPAN.
IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S ABOUT TO GO OUT.
FSST
THIS IS MINE...?!
THIS STRONG CANDLE WAS YOUR ORIGINAL LIFESPAN.
LOOK AT THIS ONE. MORE THAN HALF LEFT!
YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW.
NO!!
BUT YOU WERE BLINDED BY THAT THREE THOUSAND RYO AND TRADED YOUR LIFESPAN FOR ANOTHER.
GRIM REAPER, PLEASE!!
PLEASE HELP ME!!
THE MONEY IS MEANING-LESS IF I'M NOT ALIVE TO ENJOY IT!
GRIM REAPER, YOU HAVE TO HELP ME!

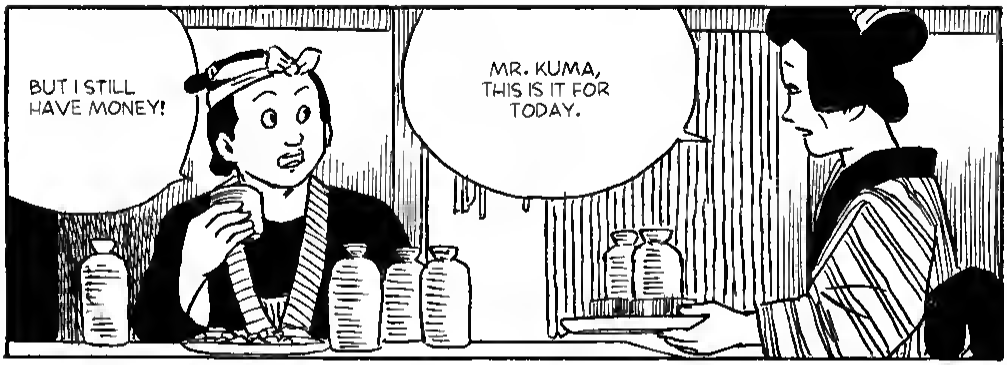

YES!! I'LL DO ANYTHING IF IT'LL HELP ME LIVE.
WELL... I GUESS IT'S OKAY. YOU TALKED ME INTO IT. DON'T KNOW IF THIS'LL WORK, BUT YOU WANNA TRY SOMETHING?
SO YOU WANT TO LIVE THAT BADLY?
IF THE FLAME TAKES TO THE NEW CANDLE, YOU'LL LIVE.
TRANSFER YOUR FLAME TO THAT CANDLE.
YOU SEE THAT NEW CANDLE OVER THERE?
O-OKAY. I'LL DO IT!
FSST KSST
IF YOU DON'T HURRY, THOUGH, IT'LL GO OUT.
LOOK! IT'S GOING OUT! HURRY UP AND DO IT!
FSST FSST FSST

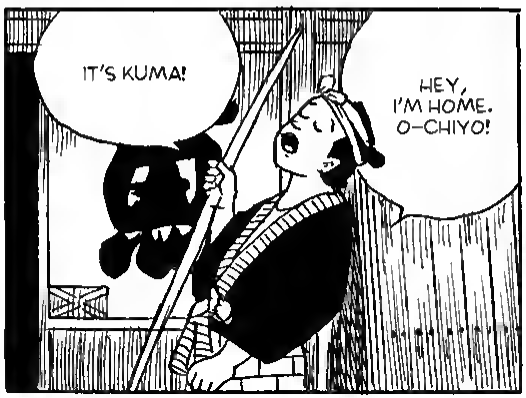

SHAKE
SHAKE
FSSSSSST
FWOOMP
HEY...IT—
IT WORKED!
NO!! IT'S
GONE
OUT!!
AH-AH-
ACHOOOO


SHIBAHAMA


KUMA WAS A FISHMONGER. HE WAS SKILLED AT SELECTING FISH AT THE RIVERSIDE MARKET, AND HE WAS AN EXPERT AT SELLING THEM.
天麩羅
天麩羅


HE REALLY LOVED SAKE. ALCOHOL WAS A BEAST THAT ALWAYS GOT THE BETTER OF HIM.
酒
天
ALTHOUGH HE HAD NO OTHER PASTIMES...
やま里


BUT I STILL HAVE MONEY!
MR. KUMA, THIS IS IT FOR TODAY.


IT'S KUMA!
HEY, I'M HOME. O-CHIYO!



SIGN: FISH


I KNOW, I KNOW. I'LL GET SERIOUS ABOUT WORK STARTING TOMORROW. IN THE MEANTIME, CAN'T YOU FIND SOME MONEY FOR ME SOMEHOW?
AND YOU CAN ASK FOR MONEY ALL YOU WANT, BUT I DON'T HAVE TWO COINS TO RUB TOGETHER.


YOU REALLY HAVE NO CONTROL WHEN IT COMES TO SAKE.
I'M SORRY. I'LL QUIT DRINKING. YOU'LL SEE.


THANK YOU! MY LOVELY WIFE.
WELL, HERE. THIS IS ALL I'VE GOT.
YOU ALWAYS SAY THAT, HONEY...
SNRRRRR
ARE YOU OKAY? YOU'LL HAVE TO BE UP EARLY TOMOR-ROW.
I KNOW.
NNGH.
IT'S MORNING.
COME ON, GET UP.
CAREFUL OF FIRE! PUT OUT YOUR COOK-ING FLAMES!
YOU CAN'T DAWDLE.
NOW, WASH YOUR FACE.

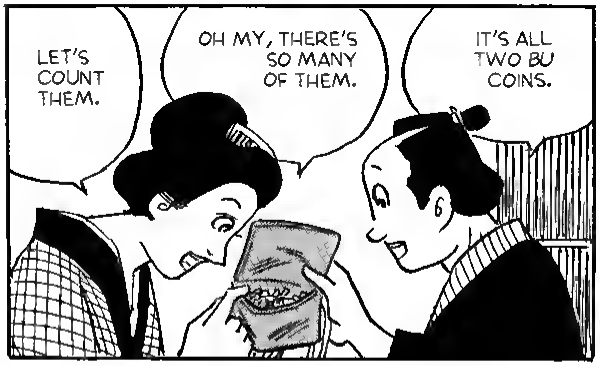

SEE YOU TONIGHT!
HERE ARE YOUR BASKETS.
AND NO DRINKING TODAY.
STRANGE, IT'S REALLY DARK OUT.
IF ONLY THAT MAN WOULD GET SERIOUS ABOUT WORK... THEN I'D HAVE NOTHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT.
IT'S NOT EVEN DAWN YET.
I WONDER IF I GOT THE TIME WRONG.

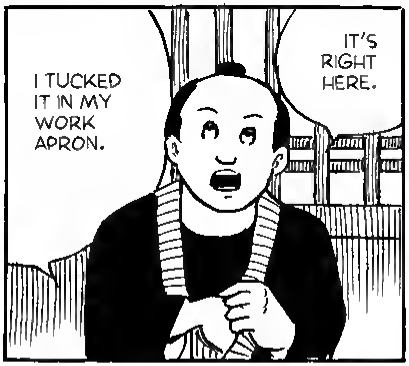

HUH? FISH MARKET'S NOT OPEN YET.
BUT I'M SO TIRED.
WELL, I'VE GOT NO CHOICE. GUESS I'LL WAIT FOR DAWN.
O-CHIYO MUST HAVE GOT THE TIME WRONG.
IT'S FINALLY GETTING LIGHT IN THE EAST.
PSSSSSH

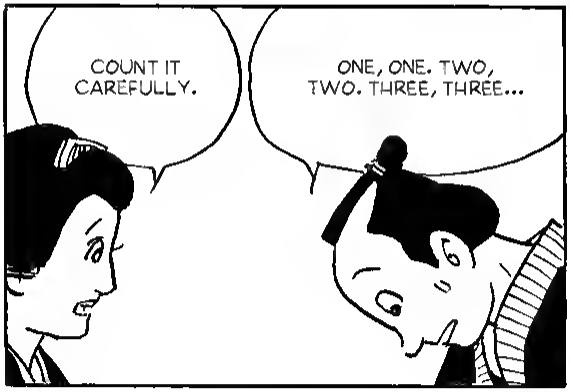

SO SLEEPY... I'M READY TO COLLAPSE.
PSSSH
PSSH PSSSH
MAYBE IT'LL WAKE ME UP IF I WASH MY FACE IN THE SEA.
PSSSSH
HM?!
WHAT'S THAT? SOMETHING HAS MY FOOT!
SPLASH
WHAT IS THIS?
OH, IT'S CAUGHT ON SOME ROPE.


A WALLET!
SKKKKSSH
IT'S REALLY HEAVY.
THIS IS REALLY SOME-THING!
SPLASH SPLASH
I'D BETTER HEAD HOME!

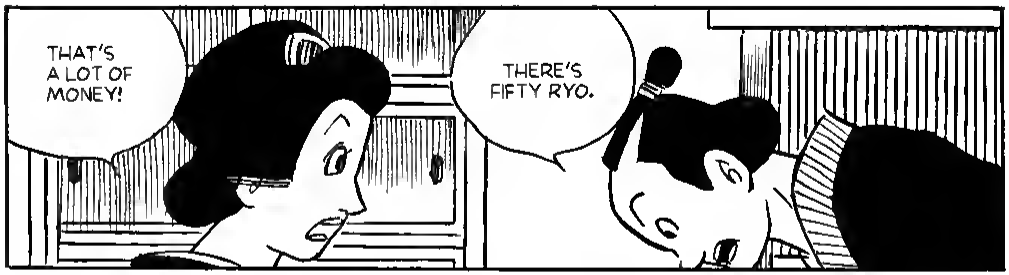

SO DID YOU BRING THE MONEY WITH YOU?
HUF HUF...AND SO I CAME-HUF- RUNNING HOME.


LET'S COUNT THEM.
OH MY, THERE'S SO MANY OF THEM.
IT'S ALL TWO BU COINS.


I TUCKED IT IN MY WORK APRON.
IT'S RIGHT HERE.

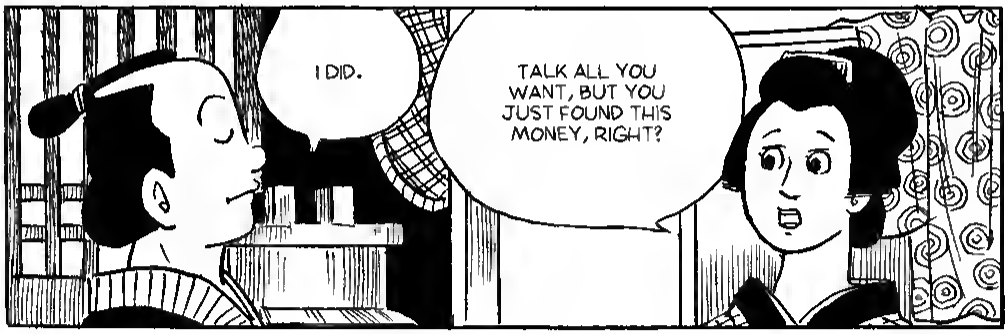

COUNT IT CAREFULLY.
ONE, ONE. TWO, TWO. THREE, THREE...


CLINK CLINK


THAT'S A LOT OF MONEY!
THERE'S FIFTY RYO.


YOU WANT ME TO BUY YOU A KIMONO?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? EAT SOME DELICIOUS FOOD, DRINK SOME GOOD WINE!
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH IT?

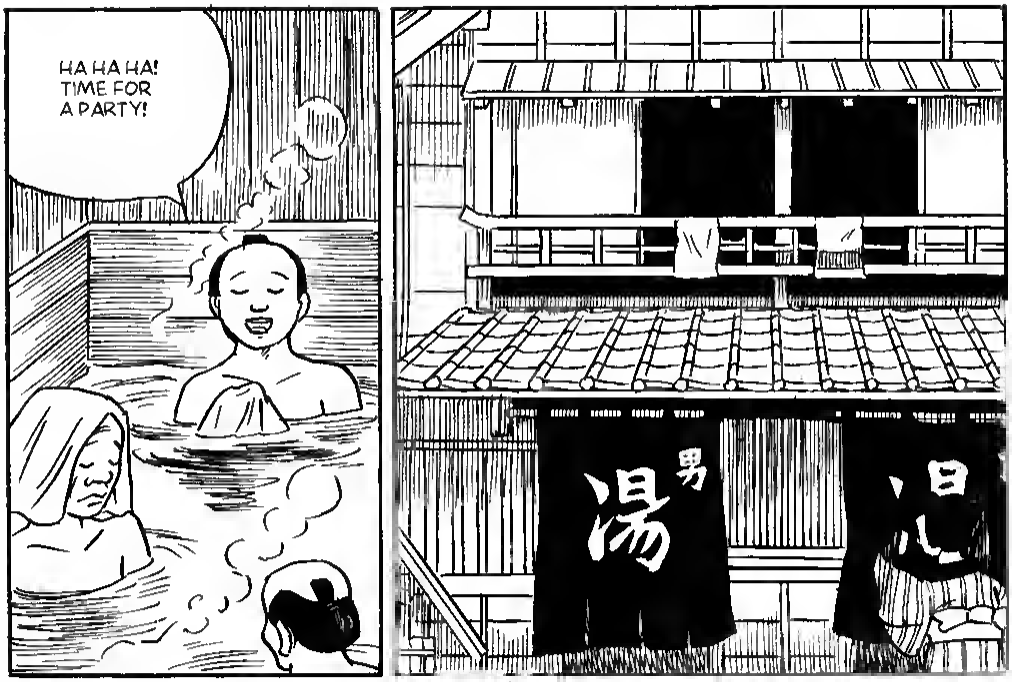

AND HOW ABOUT WE GO TO A HOT SPRINGS TOGETHER?
AND MAYBE I COULD GET SOMETHING STYLISH TO WEAR, TOO.


I DID.
TALK ALL YOU WANT, BUT YOU JUST FOUND THIS MONEY, RIGHT?

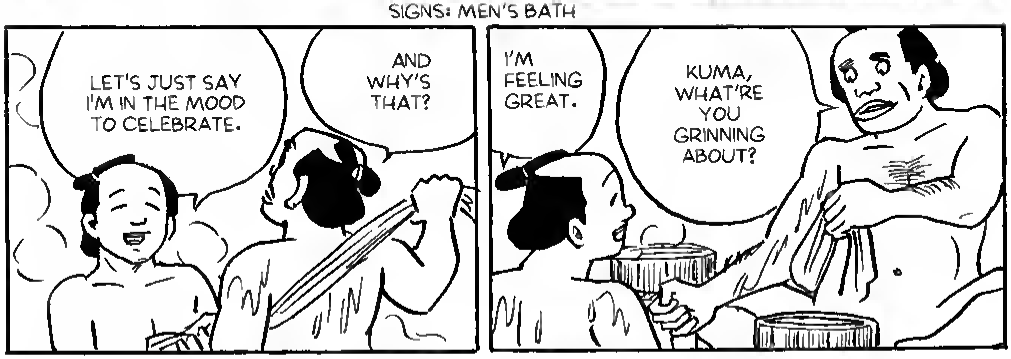

SO YOU'RE JUST GOING TO KEEP QUIET AND USE THE–
OF COURSE SOMEONE LOST IT. THAT'S WHY I WAS ABLE TO FIND IT, RIGHT?
WELL, IF YOU FOUND IT, THERE'S SOMEONE OUT THERE WHO LOST IT.
IF THE TIDES HAD PUSHED THIS WALLET OUT IN THE DIRECTION OF THE OCEAN, THE MONEY WOULDN'T EVEN BE IN THIS WORLD ANYMORE.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I DIDN'T FIND IT ON THE HIGHWAY OR ANYTHING. I PICKED IT OUT OF THE OCEAN.
AND IF THAT HAPPENED, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE IT EITHER, SO I BROUGHT IT BACK WITH ME.
THE MONEY WE USE UP HERE ON LAND WOULD HAVE DISAPPEARED AT THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN.
I'M NOT SAYING THAT WE CAN'T USE IT.
JUST WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU'VE GOT NO REASON TO GRUMBLE AT ME.

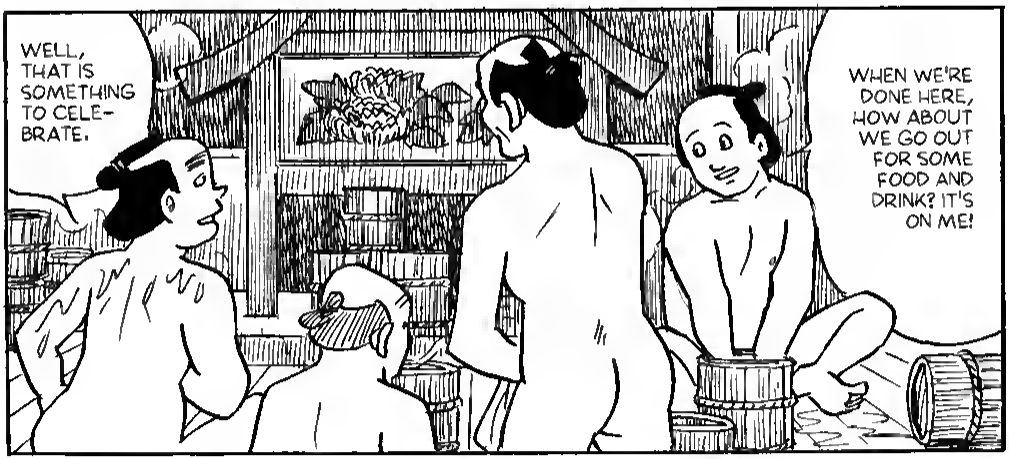

HA HA! THERE'S NO WAY I COULD SLEEP NOW. I'M FAR TOO HAPPY.
GO AHEAD.
REST A LITTLE.
IN FACT, IT'S ONLY DAWN.
WELL THEN, MAYBE I'LL NAP A BIT?
I'LL KEEP THIS SAFE FOR YOU, OKAY?
IF YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SLEEP.
WAKE ME UP WHEN IT'S NOON.
SNNRRRRR
...
FIFTY RYO...


OH...HUH?
HONEY.
SIGN: FISH
WHY?
HEY, GET OUT A TOWEL FOR ME.
HYAAAAW!
YOU SHOULD GET OUT THERE AND SELL INSTEAD.
THE BATHS?
I'M GOING TO GO TO THE BATHS.
IT'S THE BATHS FOR ME. THE BATHS...
AS IF I COULD GO AND SELL FISH NOW.



SIGNS: MEN'S BATH



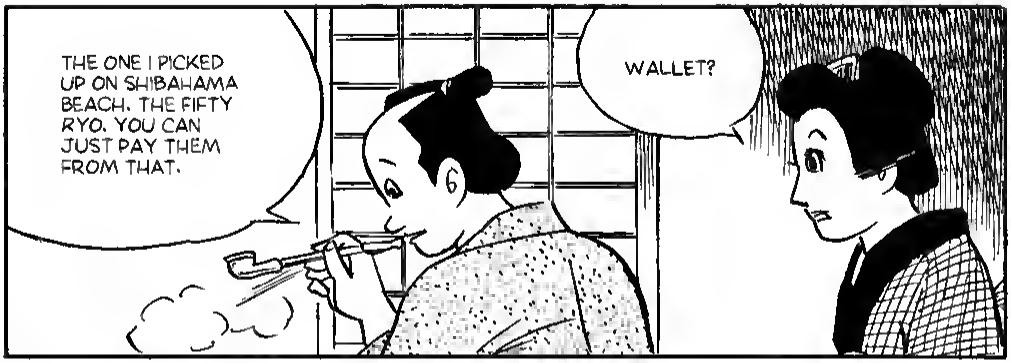



ARE YOU SURE, KUMA?
OH! EVERYONE, COME ON IN!
魚
I STOPPED BY AND ASKED THE RESTAURANT TO DELIVER.
I THOUGHT WE COULD ALL DRINK HERE.
I BROUGHT SOME FRIENDS WITH ME.
THE FOOD SHOULD BE HERE SOON.
OKAY, EVERYONE! MAKE YOURSELVES AT HOME!
HA HA HA! I'VE GOT REASON TO CELEBRATE.
OH, THE SAKE'S HERE! JUST PUT IT OVER THERE.


WHO NEEDS A REASON?
YOU HEAR THAT, GUYS? NOW WE'VE GOT SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE!
WAH HA HA HA!
HEY HEY HEY HEY
HERE WE GO!
LET'S PARTY!
NOT ME. DRINK UP! EAT, EAT, EAT!

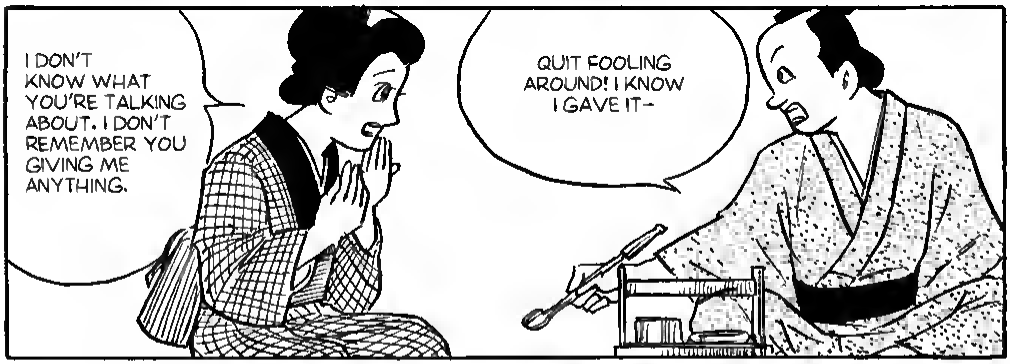

AND WE'RE CELEBRATING.. HA HA HA!
BUT THERE'S STILL SOME SAKE LEFT.
HONEY, THEY'VE ALL GONE HOME ALREADY.
HE'LL CATCH A COLD.
SNNRRRRRR
OH MY, HE'S FALLEN ASLEEP.
SNOOOORE
MUMBLE MUMBLE.

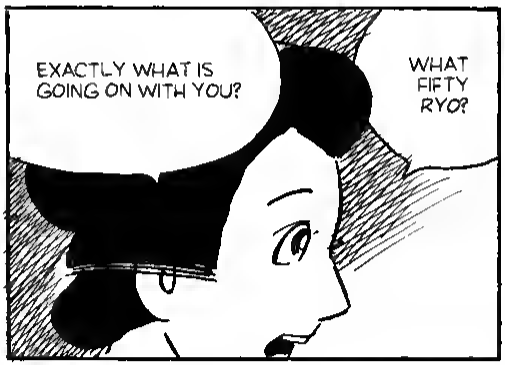

MM HMM.
CAN I HAVE SOME WATER?
OH, HONEY, YOU'RE AWAKE?
MMM...
I GUESS THEY WENT HOME, HUH?
WHERE DID EVERYBODY GO?
OH, THAT'S GOOD.
YOU DON'T GO OUT TO BUY ANY FISH. IT'S ALL CELEBRATE, CELEBRATE. YOU GO TO THE BATHS, AND BRING A CROWD BACK WITH YOU.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WHAT IS GOING ON, HONEY?
I WANTED TO ASK YOU WHEN YOU WOKE UP.
JUST PAY THEM. WITH THE MONEY FROM THAT WALLET.
HOW ARE WE GOING TO PAY FOR ALL THAT SAKE? WHERE WILL WE GET THE MONEY TO PAY THE RESTAURANT?

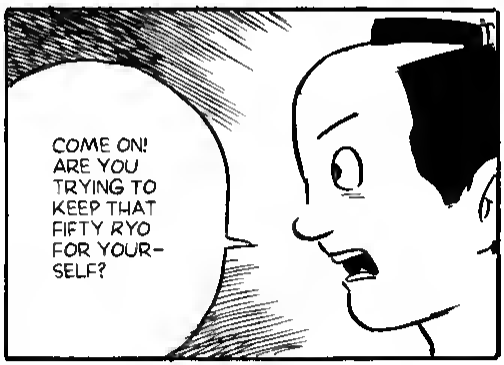

THE ONE I PICKED UP ON SHIBAHAMA BEACH. THE FIFTY RYO. YOU CAN JUST PAY THEM FROM THAT.
WALLET?


WHEN?
I GAVE YOU THE WALLET.


FIFTY RYO? YOU FOUND MONEY IN SHIBAHAMA?


I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT. I DON'T REMEMBER YOU GIVING ME ANYTHING.
QUIT FOOLING AROUND! I KNOW I GAVE IT-

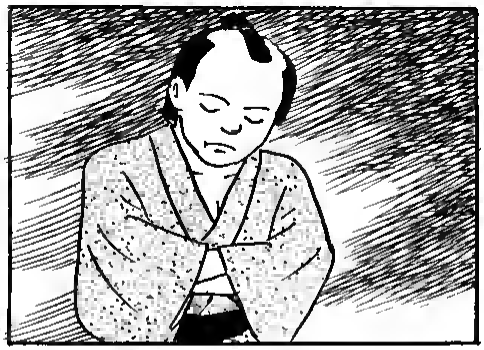

EXACTLY WHAT IS GOING ON WITH YOU?
WHAT FIFTY RYO?

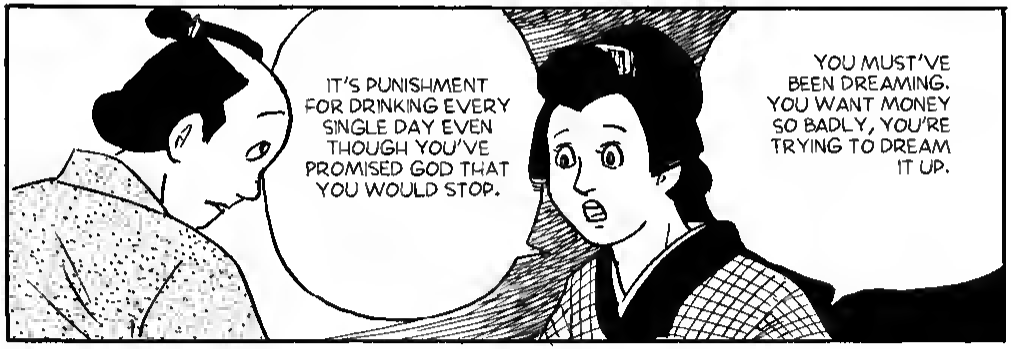

COME ON! ARE YOU TRYING TO KEEP THAT FIFTY RYO FOR YOURSELF?


JUST WHEN DID YOU GO TO THE MARKET?
I'M TELLING YOU, WHEN I WENT TO THE MARKET-


YOU CAME HOME WITH A BUNCH OF MEN AND BEGAN POURING THE SAKE AND THEN THE FOOD SHOWED UP...
WHEN I TOLD YOU TO GO TO THE MARKET, YOU TOLD ME TO QUIT JOKING, WE HAVE TO CELEBRATE. AND THEN YOU GOT A TOWEL AND WENT TO THE BATHS.


I WENT TO THE RIVER MARKET, I FOUND A WALLET AT SHIBAHAMA...
WAIT...



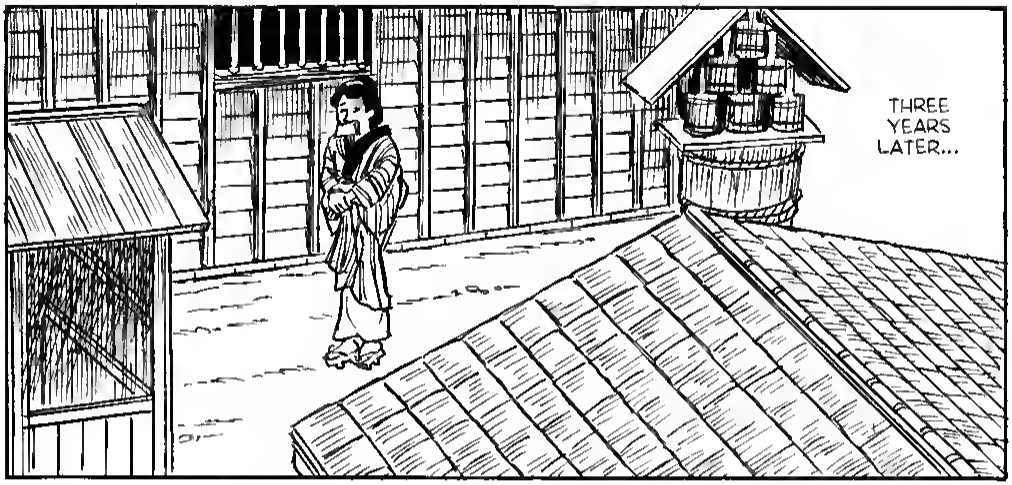

IT'S PUNISHMENT FOR DRINKING EVERY SINGLE DAY EVEN THOUGH YOU'VE PROMISED GOD THAT YOU WOULD STOP.
YOU MUST'VE BEEN DREAMING. YOU WANT MONEY SO BADLY, YOU'RE TRYING TO DREAM IT UP.


WAIT A MINUTE.
IT WAS A DREAM?
WHEN YOU'RE POOR, THOSE ARE THE ONLY KIND OF DREAMS YOU HAVE.
AND THEN YOU BROUGHT A BUNCH OF PEOPLE HOME AND ENDED UP DRINKING.
AND WHEN I TOLD YOU TO GO TO THE MARKET, YOU WENT TO THE BATHS.
I WOKE UP.
THAT'S RIGHT.
A DREAM...
THEN, I...
WELL, WHEN GOD PUNISHES YOU, THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS.
THIS IS SO DISAP-POINTING.
SO FINDING THE MONEY WAS A DREAM, BUT THE DRINKING WAS REAL?
IT WAS JUST SO REAL...

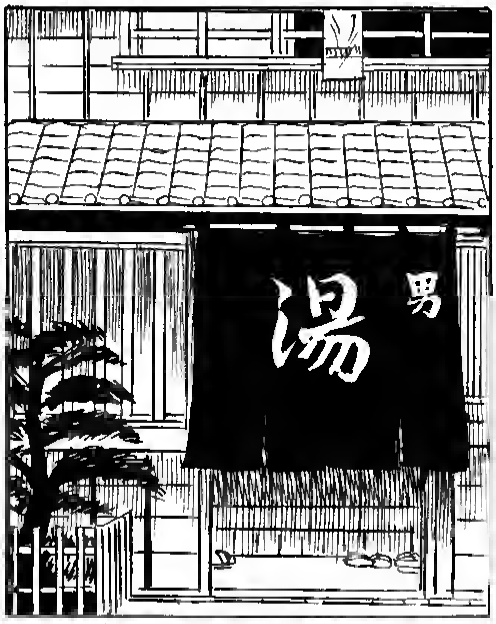

ALL THAT SAKE YOU DRANK, AND THE FOOD FROM THE RESTAURANT...
HONEY, HOW ARE WE GOING TO PAY FOR THIS?
...WHY DO YOU LIKE SAKE SO MUCH?
...I DON'T KNOW.
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?
WELL, THEN I'LL GO OVER AND SEE IF CRYING WON'T HOLD THE BILL COLLECTORS OFF.
I'LL STOP DRINKING AND WORK HARDER.
HONEY! I'M SO SORRY!!


YOUR FISH IS ALWAYS SO FRESH, MR. KUMA.
AND HERE YOU ARE.
PULL IT OUT, PUSH IT IN! MAKE IT DANCE, MAKE IT SKIP!
HEY! I'VE GOT NANKIN TAMA-SUDARE IN MY HANDS RIGHT HERE!
箱辰
OF COURSE.
COULD YOU SLICE ME SOME MACKEREL?
I'M HOME!


DON'T WORRY.
WELL, DON'T PUSH YOURSELF, HONEY.
I DID. I WAS THINKING THAT I'D INCREASE THE STOCK TOMORROW.
OH MY! YOU SOLD EVERY-THING AGAIN TODAY!
MM. I ALREADY DID.
AH, I'M HUNGRY! CAN YOU MAKE SOMETHING FOR ME TO EAT?
WHAT'S WRONG?
HONEY...
NO, I DON'T NEED A DRINK. DINNER WON'T TASTE AS GOOD.
HOW ABOUT IT? WILL YOU HAVE A DRINK? IT'S BEEN A WHILE.
IT'S TRUE. HE DOESN'T EVEN LOOK AT SAKE. JUST SELL, SELL, SELL...
HONESTLY, YOUR HUSBAND'S LIKE A DIFFERENT MAN LATELY.

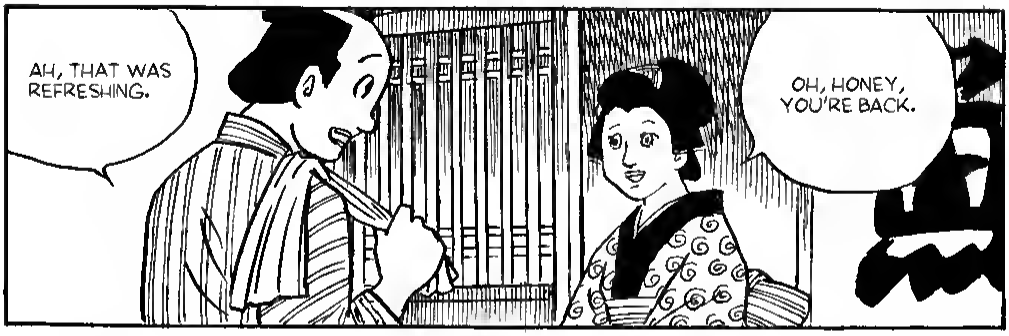






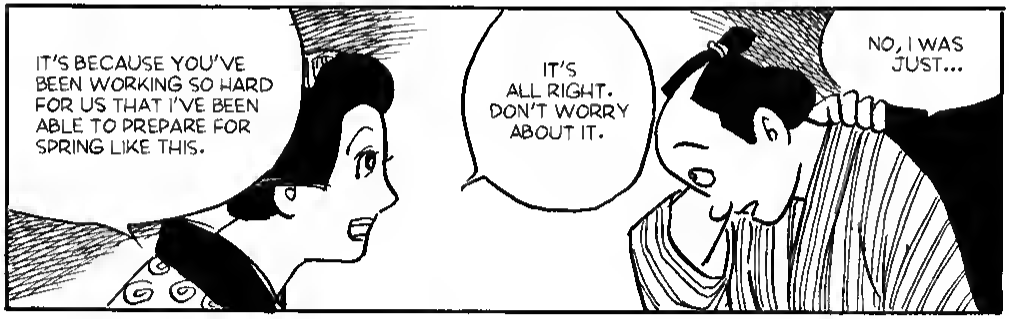
SIGN: MEN'S BATH




AH, THAT WAS REFRESHING.
OH, HONEY, YOU'RE BACK.


THE OLD ONES WERE JUST SO DIRTY, SO I REPLACED THEM.
OH HO! I WAS WONDERING WHAT THAT WONDERFUL SMELL WAS, AND HERE IT IS, NEW TATAMI MATS.


I'M SORRY. THE WIFE IS STILL THE OLD ONE.
THAT'S GREAT. LIKE THEY SAY, THE ONLY THING BETTER THAN A NEW TATAMI MAT IS A NEW WIFE!


IT'S BECAUSE YOU'VE BEEN WORKING SO HARD FOR US THAT I'VE BEEN ABLE TO PREPARE FOR SPRING LIKE THIS.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
NO, I WAS JUST...


I HAVEN'T HAD THIS IN A LONG TIME. I'VE PROBABLY FORGOTTEN WHAT IT TASTES LIKE.
FUKUCHA TEA?
HERE... HAVE SOME FUKUCHA TEA.
THAT WAS ROUGH. I FELT LIKE MY KIMONO WAS MADE FROM ALL THE COINS WE OWED.
REMEMBER NEW YEAR'S EVE THREE YEARS AGO?
IT'S BEEN HARD FOR YOU, HASN'T IT, HONEY?
SO YOU'VE COME AROUND TO THAT WAY OF THINKING?
IT'S A BLESSING JUST TO BE ABLE TO DRINK FUKUCHA TEA ON NEW YEAR'S EVE, RIGHT?
I GUESS PEOPLE, WELL, WE JUST HAVE TO WORK.
THEN I HAVE A LITTLE SOME-THING I WANT TO SHOW YOU.


YOU DON'T REMEMBER IT? LOOK INSIDE.
A REALLY DIRTY WALLET.
WHAT'S THIS? A WALLET?
HERE.
HEY! WHAT'VE YOU BEEN UP TO! THIS IS WAY TOO MUCH TO JUST BE SAVINGS!
THERE'S FIFTY RYO IN THERE.
OH! WHOA!! IT'S STUFFED WITH TWO BU PIECES.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU SAID THAT WAS A DREAM!!
IT'S THE MONEY YOU FOUND THREE YEARS AGO IN SHIBAHAMA.
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME!
WHAT?! GOD DAMN IT!!
I TOLD YOU IT WAS A DREAM. I'VE BEEN LYING TO YOU THIS WHOLE TIME.


W-WAIT A MINUTE, KUMA.
YOU TOLD ME THAT WHOLE THING WAS A DREAM. DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW AWFUL I FELT??
YOU THINK I CAN JUST FOR-GIVE YOU?!
THREE YEARS AGO, WHEN WE WERE JUST BARELY SCRAPING BY, YOU FOUND FIFTY RYO.
I HAD MY REASONS.
OF COURSE I WAS VERY HAPPY.

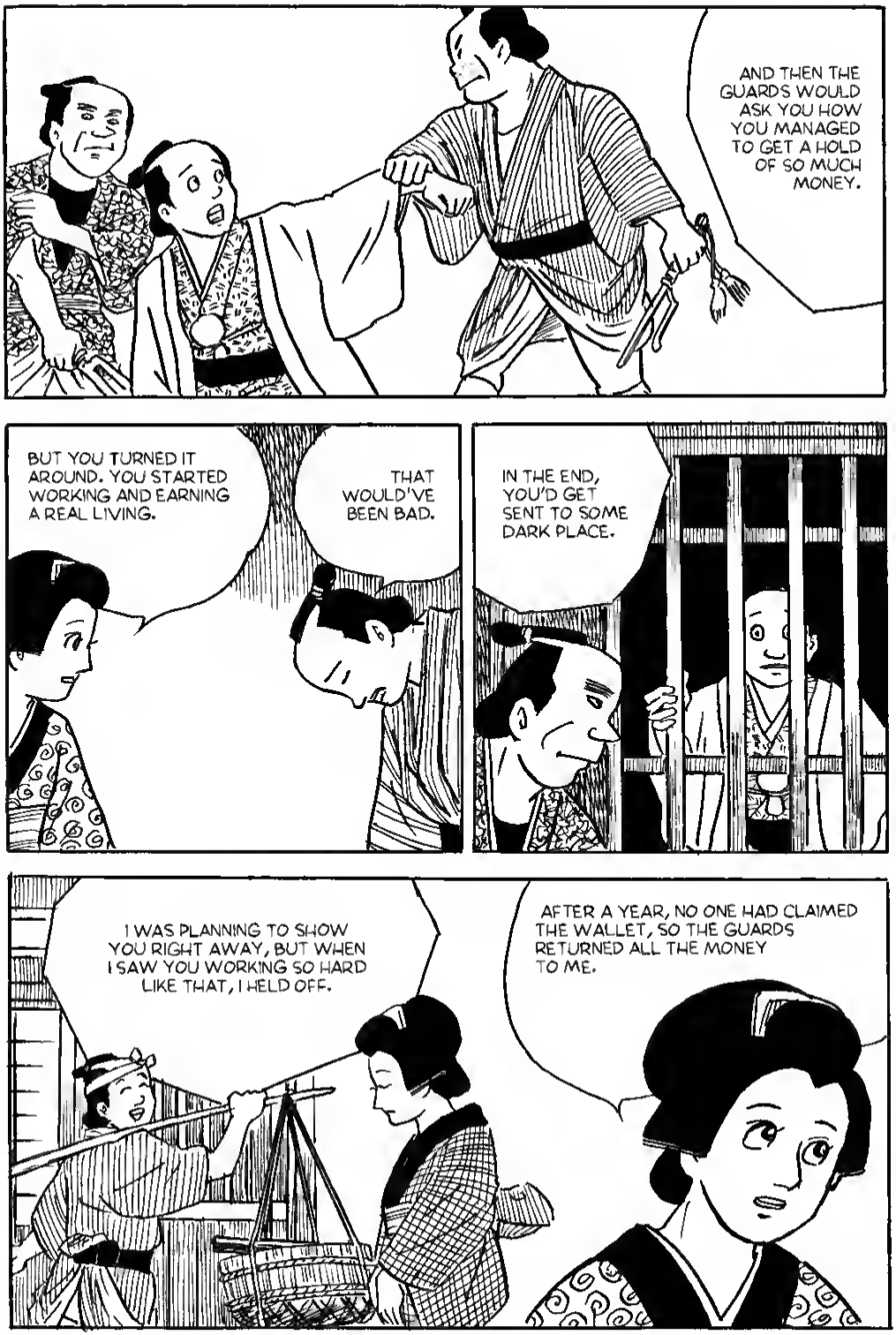

SO DID YOU BRING THE MONEY WITH YOU?
HUF HUF...AND SO I CAME-HUF-RUNNING HOME.
COUNT IT CAREFULLY.
ONE, ONE. TWO, TWO. THREE, THREE...
KLATTER
YOU WANT ME TO BUY YOU A KIMONO?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? EAT SOME DELICIOUS FOOD, DRINK SOME GOOD WINE!
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH IT?



SIGN: GUARDHOUSE

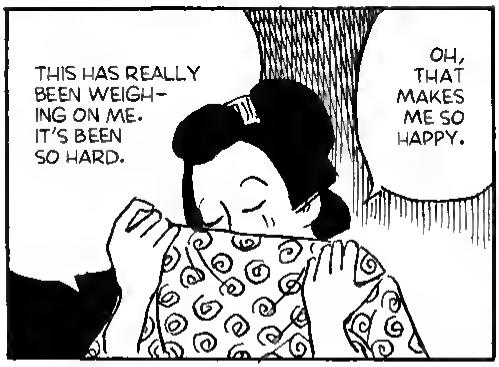


SIGN: GUARDHOUSE


AND THEN THE GUARDS WOULD ASK YOU HOW YOU MANAGED TO GET A HOLD OF SO MUCH MONEY.
BUT YOU TURNED IT AROUND. YOU STARTED WORKING AND EARNING A REAL LIVING.
THAT WOULD'VE BEEN BAD.
IN THE END, YOU'D GET SENT TO SOME DARK PLACE.
I WAS PLANNING TO SHOW YOU RIGHT AWAY, BUT WHEN I SAW YOU WORKING SO HARD LIKE THAT, I HELD OFF.
AFTER A YEAR, NO ONE HAD CLAIMED THE WALLET, SO THE GUARDS RETURNED ALL THE MONEY TO ME.


WHEN YOU SAID THAT BEFORE, I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE ALL RIGHT NOW... AND SO I GOT THE MONEY OUT...
I GUESS PEOPLE, WELL...WE JUST HAVE TO WORK.
I LIED TO YOU.
I DON'T MIND IF YOU SPEND IT ALL TONIGHT.
THIS IS MONEY YOU RECEIVED FROM THE HEAVENS, AFTER ALL.
YOU'RE PROBABLY ANGRY.
HEY, HEY! SIT BACK UP. YOU WERE EXACTLY RIGHT.
AND NOW I'M APOLOGIZING. IF YOU'RE MAD, HIT ME, KICK ME. BUT PLEASE FORGIVE ME.


IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU. THANK YOU. YOU'RE THE WIFE OF ALL WIVES, FIT FOR A GOD.
IF I HAD USED THE MONEY BACK THEN, AND THE GUARDS HAD TAKEN ME AWAY SOMEPLACE, WHO KNOWS WHAT WOULD'VE HAPPENED TO ME.


THIS HAS REALLY BEEN WEIGHING ON ME. IT'S BEEN SO HARD.
OH, THAT MAKES ME SO HAPPY.


OF COURSE I FORGIVE YOU. HOW COULD I NOT FORGIVE YOU!
SO THEN YOU FORGIVE ME?

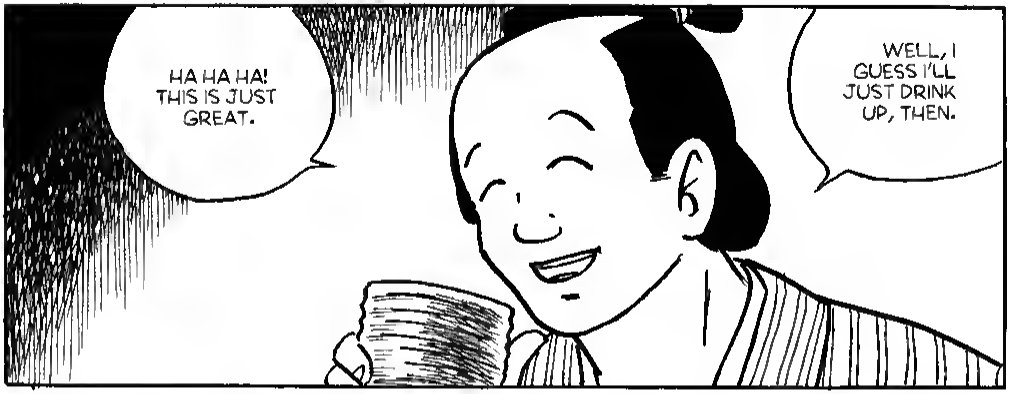

NO, NO. THANKS TO YOU, THIS NEW YEAR'S EVE, WE HAVE FIFTY RYO.
NOW THAT I'VE FINALLY TOLD YOU EVERYTHING, I FEEL SO RELIEVED.


OH... SAKE?
HOW ABOUT A CUP?
SAY, IT'S BEEN THREE YEARS ALREADY. AND I'VE GOT SOME SAKE RIGHT HERE.
COLD SAKE... POUR IT INTO THIS TEACUP.
HERE YOU GO.
LET'S DRINK IT COLD.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE. MAYBE I COULD HAVE A CUP?
I HOPE WE'LL BE GOOD FRIENDS AGAIN.
OH! I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU FOR A WHILE, HUH?
HUP, HUP, HUP...THANKS.
GOOOONG
I CAN HARDLY HANDLE THE DELICIOUS SCENT.
HOW DELIGHT-FUL...I'M SO HAPPY.


THEY'RE RINGING THE NEW YEAR BELLS.
OH, WHAT WAS THAT NOISE?
GOOOOOONG
魚

SIGN: FISH

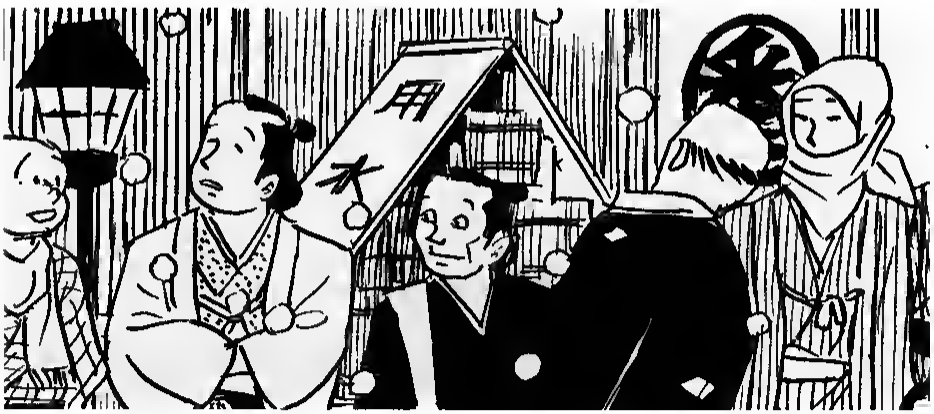

WHAT A BLESSING IT IS TO LISTEN TO THOSE BELLS AND NOT WORRY ABOUT DEBT.
AH, THE NEW YEAR BELLS...WE NEVER HAD THE CHANCE TO JUST LISTEN TO THEM BEFORE.


HA HA HA! THIS IS JUST GREAT.
WELL, I GUESS I'LL JUST DRINK UP, THEN.


WHAT'S WRONG, HONEY?
I WON'T DRINK IT!
NO...


I DON'T WANT TO WAKE UP AND FIND IT WAS ALL A DREAM AGAIN!

AFTERWORD by Yoshihiro Tatsumi



Rakugo, or "Fallen Words," is a storytelling art form that is unique to Japanese traditional culture, and one that is extremely interesting to me. The stories are handed down through generations, and the development and mood of a given story can be altered drastically by the personality and style of the performer. A single *rakugo* story can be transformed into any number of wildly disparate performances. The pleasures of *rakugo* emerge from this universal, mutable quality: generations of performers continue to retell these stories, improving upon them and crafting them to suit the tastes of the present day

This is not the case in the world of *manga* and *gekiga*.[1] There may be such a thing as "classic *manga*," but it's simply not possible for other artists to add their own improvements and endlessly rework a story drawn by another manga artist. Once the work is done, it's done.

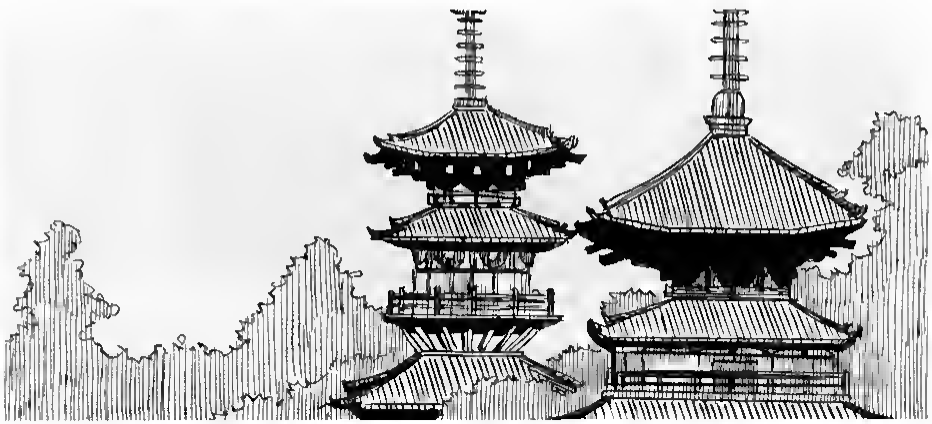


And since its inception, the *gekiga* style of cartooning has consistently eschewed humor. With this book, I attempted to take up the challenge of *rakugo*, where laughter is supreme, and to tell the stories in the visual language of *gekiga*. Searching for commonalities between these two distinct art forms, I realized that they both put great impor-

[1] Translated literally as "dramatic pictures," *gekiga* is a term Tatsumi coined in 1957 to describe the darker, more realistic style of cartooning that he and his peers were pioneering. *Gekiga* might best be thought of as a style or genre within the broader term of *manga*, in the way that "underground" or "alternative" are subsets of the term "comics."

tance on timing: how a *rakugo* story is performed, and how a *gekiga* story flows from panel to panel. Even so, I didn't really think that these two approaches to storytelling could ever get along.

But when I investigated this possible combination further, I was overwhelmed by the sheer volume and breadth of classic *rakugo* source material. There was an "anything goes" approach to the portrayal of the citizens of Edo, and I was amazed to discover a mix of human kindness, mystery, the bizarre, love stories, puns, and unexpected plot twists. I was forced to reevaluate my perception of classic *rakugo*: it was closer to the world of *gekiga* than I'd thought.



NEW YEAR FESTIVAL: When all is said and done, that bratty little kid is a great character.

FIERY SPIRITS: I love this kind of story. How to portray the heart of a woman, jealous even after she is nothing more than a fireball? This was a real sticking point for me.

MAKING THE ROUNDS: With Yoshiwara as the setting, the foolishness of the men is sort of cute, isn't it? I used a few tricks to try and bring out the personalities of each man.

THE GOD OF DEATH: The candles that measure our lifespans. That last scene makes your heart race, like a bizarre horror movie. I tried to put a little zest into it.

SHIBAHAMA: Of all the classic *rakugo* stories, this is the most famous and popular. A veteran storyteller retired from the world of *rakugo* when he found he was no longer able to express the charm of the wife. I've put my reputation in the *rakugo* world on the line by drawing this one.

And now, I leave you in the capable hands of the next story..."

"The Japanese phrase used here is the traditional closing of a *rakugo* storyteller

NOTES

P. 10: Signs (right to left): Inn; Shinzaemonjosai-ya; Osakaya Yohyakuju.

P. 13: A *ryo* was a unit in the old system of weights and measures in Japan, and also a unit of currency said to have been established in the mid-1500s by Shingen Takeda, an important *daimyo* in feudal Japan. Use of the *ryo* continued in the Edo period until the introduction of the yen in the Meiji Period. At that time, one *ryo* was decreed to be equivalent to one yen. In modern currency, a *ryo* is probably equivalent to about 10,000 yen.

Daimyo was a title given to landholding feudal rulers used from the tenth century until the middle of the nineteenth century.

P. 14: When making Japanese-style pickles, called *tsukemono*, the vegetables are placed in buckets with vinegar and spices. A rock or some other heavy weight is then placed on top to put pressure on the vegetables inside, thus reducing their size as they pickle.

P. 18: The deep, cornered sleeves of kimonos have traditionally been used as the equivalent of pockets, and even today, are used to carry wallets and other small articles.

P. 22: Tennoji Temple was one of the "Three Edo Lotteries" permitted by the Tokugawa *shogunate* from 1700.

P. 24: During the Edo period, Yoshiwara was a red-light district in what is now Tokyo's Taito-ku, and one of the few areas in the country where brothels were permitted to operate.

P. 26: *Oiran* is a word for prostitutes used especially in the Edo period, and is closer to courtesan than prostitute in meaning. Depending on her rank and seniority, an *oiran* was able to pick and choose her clients, and often refused to see men she found disagreeable.

P. 32: The date written on the lottery ticket is January 20. The twentieth day of the new year was traditionally the final day of New Year celebrations.

P. 39: Door: Fugetsu Sweets. Sign: Shiruko sweet beans. Shiruko is a sweet, thick soup made with adzuki beans.

P. 43: The sandals worn here are *geta*, which are traditional sandals with a wooden base and a fabric thong. In Japan, wearing outdoor footwear inside is very bad manners and not permitted, even in some public buildings such as schools and hospitals.

P. 44: The sandals worn here are *zori*, which are similar to *geta* in that they are sandals with a wooden base and fabric thong, but *zori* are usually worn with tabi socks and are more formal than *geta*. It goes without saying that if wearing outdoor footwear inside is prohibited, outdoor footwear in bed is shocking.

P. 47: The sign here reads *Jusanri* Potatoes, a term often used as a name for baked-potato stands, thanks to a play on the words *kuri*—which means both nine *ri* (a traditional measure of distance equal to about 2.5 miles)

and "chestnut"—and *yori*—which means both four *ri* and "more than." *Jusanri* means thirteen *ri*, a number arrived at from the saying "*Kuri yori umai*": More delicious than chestnuts. But with the alternate meanings of the words, this ends up being nine *ri* plus four *ri*, hence thirteen *ri*, *jusanri*, as the name of the baked-potato shop.

P. 48.2: The jacket worn here is a *haori*, a formal coat worn over a kimono.

P. 48.3: The first shrine visit of the year (*hatsumode*) is an important part of the New Year celebrations.

P. 53: The Yodo is a large river in Osaka prefecture.

P. 54: Signs (right to left): Tempura; Shoichi Inari; Tsukeyaki soy fry Shoichi Inari is the name of a shrine

P. 55.1: The *tanuki* is a shape-shifting raccoon dog famous in Japanese folklore for its mischievousness.

P. 55.3: Sign: Elegant, Shinko Sweets, Atelier.

P. 55.5: Bucket. Beans. Sign: Dango.

P.56: Sign: Green Grocer.

P. 57: A *bu* is a division of the *ryo*, with four *bu* to one *ryo*.

P. 62: Signs (right to left): Millet; Corn; Kites; Dragon.

P. 63: An *unari* kite is made of bamboo and paper in such a way that it makes a sound when it flies.

P. 75: Odawara is a city about fifty miles from Tokyo, and during the Edo period, was a major station on the Tokaido highway, which connected Edo with Kyoto.

P. 86: Traditional Japanese painting is done with ink from inkstones. Before the artist can paint, he or she must grind the inkstone with water in a *suzuri*, a black container with a slope on which to grind the ink.

P. 92: Signs (right to left): Jimotonishiki; Kameya Souvenirs.

P. 116: Hanakawado is a neighborhood in Tokyo's Taito-ku.

P. 117: Sign: Eel.

P. 135: The priest is reciting the Heart Sutra, a Mayahana Buddhist sutra, in an effort to calm the spirits of the women. The priest would be chanting the sutra in a slightly wavering monotone and individual words would be almost impossible to pick out.

P. 157.1: The Keicho period was from 1596–1615. The Genna period started immediately after and ran until 1624.

P. 157.3: The Meireki period was from 1655–1658.

P. 157: Asakusa is in Taito-ku and is home to one of the most prominent and recognizable shrines in Japan, Asakusa Jinja.

P. 160: Yoshida Kenko (approx. 1283–1350) was a Buddhist priest and Japanese scholar whose book, *Essays In Idleness*, an application of Zen philosophy to social life, is one of the most widely studied texts of medieval Japan.

P. 171: An *oiran* or a geisha will often enter into a relationship with a preferred client, who is then referred to as her *danna*, or husband. However, this is not necessarily a romantic relationship, and the *danna* is usually required to pay a great deal for clothing, lessons, and other expenses of the woman, often without much in return other than preferred client status.

P. 177: Sign: Station. Lamp: Tea House. Bottom: Hiroshige. Hiroshige is likely a reference to the celebrated Edo period *ukiyo-e* painter by that name, who often depicted scenes such as the one on this page. However, rather than using just the *kanji* characters, Tatsumi here uses the *katakana* characters for the first two syllables, which are the same as the last two syllables of his own name.

P. 178.1: Signs (right to left): Inari Daimyo Shrine; Daimyo Shrine. Gate: Offering.

P. 178.2: Signs (right to left): Elegant, Shinko Sweets, Atelier; Shoichi Inari Daimyo.

P. 178.3: Sign: Soba.

P. 179.1: Inari Okami is the god/goddess of harvests (in particular, rice) and foxes.

P. 179.3: Signs (right to left): Susoba; Yakesoba; Agesoba.

P. 179.5: Mugitoro is a glutinous shredded yam and barley rice dish.

P. 180: Hatsu-uma is a festival that generally falls in the first week of February, and is an important date of celebration for believers in Inari Okami, as this was the date on which Inari Okami appeared at the main Iinari shrine, Fushimi Inari Taisha.

P. 185.1: Sign: *Daruma* shop.

P. 185.2: Sign: Rest stop.

P. 186: Signs (right to left): Reservoir; Nakanocho. Nakanocho was the road passing through the center of Yoshiwara.

On the road leading to any shrine, there is usually a *torii* archway, or gate, which indicates the boundary of the shrine grounds.

P. 187: Tea shop is another word for brothel in Japan.

P. 189: Sign: Yamabu Kijaya.

P. 205: Box: Natto beans. Natto is a fermented food made of soybeans.

P. 212: Sign: *Sake*.

P. 226: His wife is clapping together a flint and a piece of iron to create sparks at his shoulders as he leaves the house. This practice is called *kiribi*, and was very common during the Edo period, although now it is mostly constrained to traditional spheres such as shrines and geisha houses. The sparks are thought to scare off any demons or angry spirits and keep the departing person safe from harm.

P. 242.1: Signs: *Tempura*.

P. 242.2: Sign: *Yamasato*.

P. 242.3: Signs (right to left): What kind of life is a life without *sake*?; *Sake*.

P. 244: The man calling "Careful of fire" here is the town crier/night watchman. Fire was a real concern at the time since all the houses were made of wood, and if a citizen wasn't careful with their cooking flame, whole sections of the city could end up burning down. The town crier would call out reminders during the night when people were especially likely to go to sleep with the fire still burning.

Lantern: Suehiro. Suehiro was an area in Edo that roughly corresponds to the Sotokanda area of Chiyoda-ku in modern Tokyo.

P. 263: Nankin Tamasudare is a traditional type of street performance. The performer uses a screen of bamboo sticks tied together to create different shapes to illustrate the story he or she is telling.

P. 266.3: Kuma is referring to a Japanese maxim that says *tatami* and wives are better new, meaning that new things are generally more beautiful and feel better.

P. 266.4: Even in modern Japan, the end of the year is punctuated by a frenzy of cleaning to prepare for the new year. However, in the Edo period, the beginning of the year was considered to be the beginning of spring, which is why O-chiyo mentions preparing for spring.

P. 267: *Fukucha* tea is green tea—with things like Japanese pepper, dried plums, or black soy beans—brewed at New Year's to celebrate long life.



Yoshihiro Tatsumi, circa 2009

